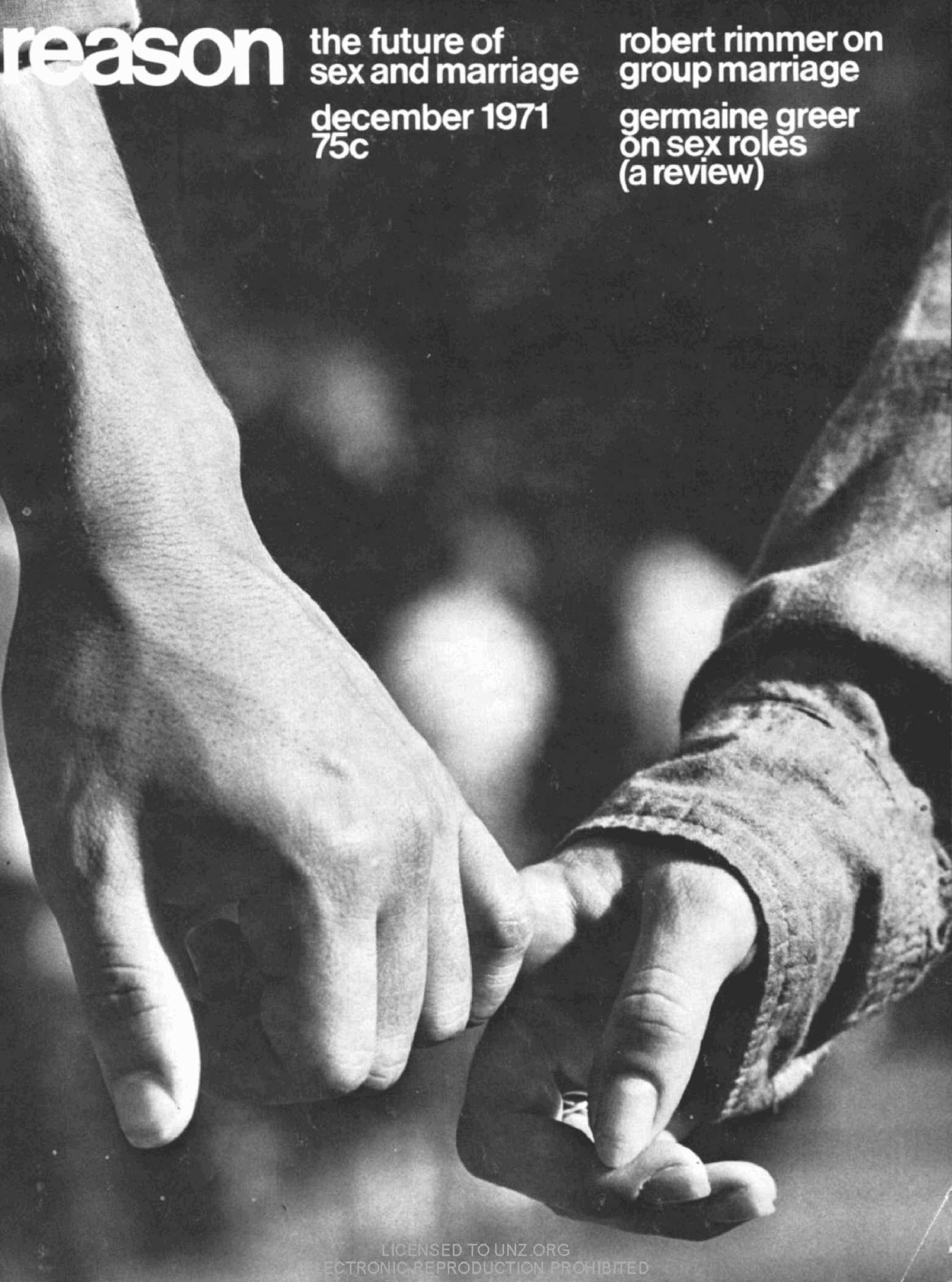
reason

the future of sex and marriage

robert rimmer on group marriage

december 1971
75c

germaine greer on sex roles (a review)



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contents

The Future of Marriage: An Interview with Robert Rimmer — 4
Mark Frazier

Poems — 10
Wendy McElroy
Robert P. Baker

Equality and The Sexes — 11
Tibor Machan

Freedom's A Long Time Coming . . . — 13
Lynn Kinsky

Poems — 17
Wendy McElroy

What To Do When The Collapse Comes — 18
Alastair MacLeary

Book Review: *THE FEMALE EUNUCH* — 20
Barbara Turner Luce

Trends — 24

Classifieds — 26

Publisher's Notes — 27

Letters — 28

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• Announcement

With this issue Robert Poole assumes the position of Editor, with Tibor Machan becoming Associate Editor. This change is in keeping with *REASON*'s policy of periodically rotating the editorship among its associate editors. No change of policy is thereby implied.

The publisher does not necessarily endorse without reservation the products and services advertised here and does not necessarily agree with the ideas expressed in signed articles.

Academic Associates announces that all orders for Nathaniel Branden's book, *THE DISOWNED SELF*, received in connection with *REASON*'s special publication order will be filled by the end of December.

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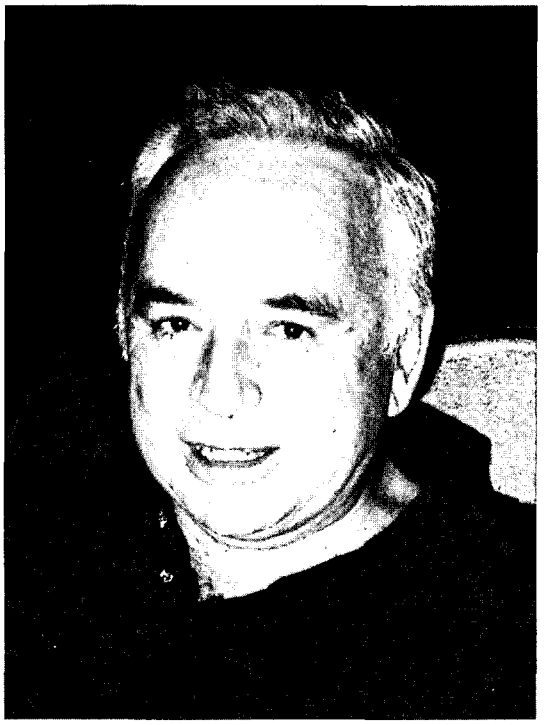
the future of marriage:



an interview with robert rimmer

In these days of literary cynicism, it is rare to find an author who is an explicit romanticist; it is even rarer to find one whose books strike such a responsive chord that he is literally deluged with letters. Robert H. Rimmer is such an author. His novels dealing with sexual relationships have been underground and "overground" best-sellers ever since THE HARRAD EXPERIMENT *was published in 1967. And his two most recent books, collections of letters from readers accompanied by discussions of his philosophy, have also proved popular sellers.*

What is it that Rimmer has to say that arouses such intense interest? Rimmer starts with two premises that will be familiar to REASON *readers: rationality (as opposed to unthinking adherence to custom and tradition) and liberty (the right of each individual to live his life in any non-coercive way he chooses). From this starting point, Rimmer searchingly and honestly evaluates Western society's ideas about male/female relationships, sex roles, and marriage. Not surprisingly he finds much that is stupid, senseless, and boring in our sexual customs. If all people—male and female—are equally human, autonomous individuals, why then our sexual double standards? Why does the State need to regulate whom we sleep with, when, where, and for how long? Should we insist on monogamy when technology and medicine allow us long, varied lives and contraception allows us choice in the matter of child-bearing?*

Rimmer argues for a radically new sexual ethic. When his first novel, THE REBELLION OF YALE MARRATT *(dealing with bigamy) was rejected by 14 publishers, Rimmer and some friends scraped together the money to form Challenge Press, which stayed in business long enough to publish the book and go bankrupt. Undaunted, he tried again with* THAT GIRL FROM BOSTON, *earning this time a small profit. But it was* THE HARRAD EXPERIMENT *in 1967 that rocketed Rimmer to fame. In it Rimmer describes an experimental residential college in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in which human relationships are the major emphasis (the students attend academic classes at nearby Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, etc.). Means to Harrad College's ends include male/female roommates, nude physical education, and seminars in human values. The paperback edition was an instant success, despite the total lack of reviews. Soon thereafter,* YALE MARRATT *was brought out in paperback, this time to sell quite well. And in 1969 Rimmer followed up with* PROPOSITION 31, *about a pair of middle-class California couples who decide to form a corporate marriage.*

The sense of life expressed in these books—the benevolence, honesty, and openness that Rimmer calls "defenselessness"—was among the factors

prompting the flood of letters Rimmer has received. He has obviously read and thought a great deal, especially in psychology, and takes ideas *very seriously. Rimmer's idealism and avowed literary romanticism have attracted many libertarians. In* THE HARRAD LETTERS TO ROBERT RIMMER *and* YOU AND I, SEARCHING FOR TOMORROW *the most frequently-mentioned favorite authors of the letter-writers (besides Rimmer) are Ayn Rand and Robert Heinlein.*

*What sort of a man is Bob Rimmer? How did this self-made businessman (*Harvard *MBA in 1941, now president of Relief Process Printing Corp.) develop such idealism and such a radical perspective on sex and marriage? To find out,* REASON *dispatched contributing editor Mark Frazier to interview him in Boston. Here is what we learned.*

REASON: Your books offer a radical evaluation of one of America's least-criticized institutions, monogamous marriage. Why do you think reform of this institution is so critical and what do you think should replace it?

RIMMER: I don't agree with your evaluation of monogamy. Everyone's criticizing monogamy today and they're criticizing the nuclear family and saying that it can't continue to exist. Despite the criticisms, though, it's obvious that *some* kind of family will still exist. You've got to have some kind of a structure to raise children in, some kind of a family system. If you don't, then you're just throwing the kids to the winds and you'll end up with a weakened society. The whole basis of a family system is to give that youngster the love and security he needs in growing up. The nuclear family doesn't do that or *hasn't* been doing it, because it's so pressured because of technology and because more and more women are working so they're dependent on day-care centers for rearing children.

I think that what's going to happen is that monogamy per se is going to come in many different varieties in the future. Monogamy will still be there, but it will be much more open-ended. And I think that in 20 years there will probably be very little divorce because of adultery. It would be widely accepted that you would have other post-marital experiences. Along with this there would be many bigamous marriages, whether they were sanctioned by the State or not. The reason I say "bigamous" is that I'm thinking that many of the older people, particularly those on Social Security, would tend to join together in some kind of living form.

REASON: That's happening already, though nobody talks much about it.

RIMMER: Yes, it is, and it's going to become much more common. These are primarily *economic* bigamous marriages—economic groups of three people trying to stay out of "senior citizen centers." It's a viable arrangement if they are reasonably able to take care of themselves, because then they can have sufficient income by pooling their Social Security.

REASON: A lot of people today are finding it's all they can do to understand and relate to themselves, let alone one other person in a marriage. Why do you think people can handle a number of relationships?

RIMMER: I don't think they can *easily*. I think they would have to learn to do this. The question is: Will it prove worthwhile if you as an individual have such experiences in expanding your life, by expanding your intimate contacts? Where this is probably going to occur more than any other place is in the colleges and universities. Probably the "showcase" type of people who will be involved in it will be young people—young faculty, professors and their wives, and so forth—because these are the people who have gone through the intellectual training in their marriage and they've read all the books; they're sophisticated.

REASON: What about the Silent Majority types?

RIMMER: Well, especially at the lower middle class level, I would say that to make the mental adjustment to live this way is beyond them. Their whole monogamous system is based on getting married—and then the man goes down to the barroom and watches television and the wife stays home. And the relationship of the male to the female in the lower income groups is considerably different from ours, despite Women's Liberation, which is working its way down to where it's going to change things.

REASON: Isn't Women's Liberation primarily a concern of college-educated people?

RIMMER: Indirectly, it has a greater effect than you'd imagine. The lower income man has a wife who now has to work too to support the family. If they want any material goods or something, and he's making in the area of $10,000, if she's making $7-8000, they're able to live a hell of a lot better. An awful lot of women are working because there is no husband to support them. This lower income woman is now getting out into society—not "Society"—but into the business world, and she's finding out a great deal more about herself in relation to males.

She will no longer *take it*, so even though she may laugh at the Betty Friedans and the Gloria Steinems or think that they're pretty far out, she's absorbing a lot of it. She's not going to *take* the husband who goes to the barroom and comes home late. In fact, I was reading an article that the tendency toward all-male bars is gradually drying up. In other words, if you're going to drink, you're going to drink at home with her and not with a lot of men down in the bar.

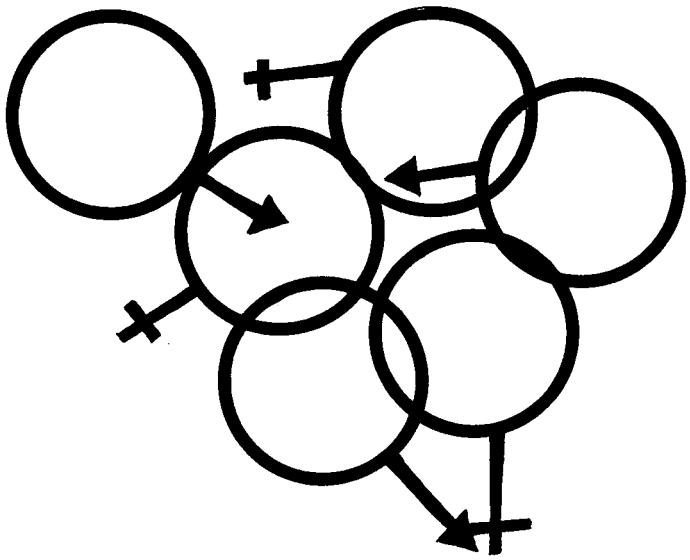
REASON: What or who among all the forces opposing corporate marriage would you say is most menacing?

RIMMER: I don't think that religion per se would oppose it. A lot of Catholic priests have written me who actually believe in it; they believe it could be incorporated in the framework of their church. This is true of much of the clergy that I have met. But I think the biggest problem is just the general conditioning of the middle class to the idea that sexual sharing is dirty. This could be changed over a period of eight to 10 years. I think the younger generation might tend to correct it, but it's been a long, thorough indoctrination. You just don't *have* sex on the kind of basis that would obtain in a corporate marriage (where it might be for a certain length of time sleeping with one person, say a week, and then maybe sleeping with *another* person). This is considered very immoral in this society and this is the old Judeo-Christian heritage.

REASON: John Holt and Ivan Illich talk about the extended family in the early 1900s. It used to be very strong in American life and when it went under,

with superhighways and suburbs, white middle class people really lost something.

RIMMER: Yes, I agree. But, you know, the extended family isn't completely gone. I was reading an interesting article, I think it was in the *CENTER MAGAZINE*, that sheds some light on this. You know the common view that the black family often depends on a matriarchal system because the man runs away and the family is supported and held together by the mother. But this article came out with an analysis of many, many black families and found that this was not so. That even though the father might not be around (or might well be in the background because that's the only way they can get welfare), there is a very large extended family going on among many blacks. So that the mother is not just sitting there alone with her children, but she's got aunts and uncles and all kinds of relationships which are there, which create a very much larger extended family than the average white person has today.



REASON: What do you think of the group-sex movement, the "swinging" groups?

RIMMER: There's a world of difference between the kind of long-term human relationships portrayed in my books and the mechanical world of the swingers. One publisher has been trying to orient his swingers' magazine around *PROPOSITION 31*. He runs a page in it every month, full of "Proposition 31" advertisements, which is kind of sad because, you know, the couples are *advertising*, they're not doing it. I have received hundreds of letters from young married couples (married under ten years), who would like very much to find another couple, but they can't seem to find one. I don't know if they can just go out searching or how this happens. I'd say that if it wasn't part of their early educational environment it would be difficult for them to do it.

REASON: You don't think today's under-30 generation is ready for corporate marriages?

RIMMER: I think even people of your generation tend to miss the point. They say, "What the hell, *HARRAD* already exists—guys are sleeping with girls in colleges." But that's not the point at all. I would say it's not very different in your generation from what it was in mine, in terms of you meet a girl, you like a girl, you can get very committed to this one person. But during three or four years of college it is very difficult to experience maybe two or three "in-depth" relationships. Because the structure isn't set up to do that. You can take a girl to your room or she may take you to hers, but it's a hit-or-miss contact. You don't really get involved. Also, you're not in the environment that I suggest Harrad should have where it would almost be part of the deal.

Keep in mind that all men are not conditioned for this and I'm not saying that everything I say is for *every*one; I'm saying it's for some people and that's a good bunch. I would say that people who went to a Harrad-type college should at the beginning *assume* that they will change roommates and have at least three roommates in their undergraduate years. The learning process then, coming out of Harrad, would make possible a good marriage. Number one, the sexual relationship would not be so tense as it would be for a couple in their 30s trying to experiment.

REASON: Do you think there should be a prerequisite of a Harrad-type experience or, say, ten years of monogamous marriage in order to make a corporate marriage work?

RIMMER: I don't really know. Lately I've been saying, "Why doesn't some college try this?" If a college or university can't do it, they could certainly do it in conjunction with an organization that arranges it, more or less "sub rosa approved." If you can experiment as Masters and Johnson do, with people copulating, let's *really* experiment with people in their interpersonal relationships and find out about jealousy and find out what it is and why people get "hung up" in relation to each other. You can find out so much about this and yourself in this kind of an environment, but it has to be structured right. That's not so of universities today.

REASON: Many single-sex schools are now going coeducational. Won't this help change the setting?

RIMMER: It will help but it takes time for attitudes to change. Have you read *WOMEN AT YALE*, written by two graduate females? It's really good. It covers the first year of women being admitted, the male trying to discover himself in relation to these females, and the fact that a great many males wanted an all-male college there. They did not want females. The authors gathered information in over 200 sessions over a period of time, and one of the things that came out very clearly was the goldfish bowl atmosphere of sex that would occur in a contained type college experience, so that everyone would know that Mary is with Joe, etc. So it is impossible for her when the breakup comes.

One interesting thing—one female who entered school just moved in with a guy, the way it is in *HARRAD EXPERIMENT*. It got back to the dean and he called the guy in and said, "You can't do this. This is not the deal at all. If you want to room

together, why don't you get off campus or get married?" But they didn't want to move off campus and they didn't want to be married—they just wanted to live together in the same room. The authors contrast that with the fact that it's all right to take any girl into a room and make love to her, but she can't stay there, you can't be deeply involved. And they contrast it with the weekend system of male/female dating. It's a good book.

REASON: In your own development of this outlook, what has been the strongest inhibition or obstacle that you have faced?

RIMMER: I didn't have any! When I was at Bates (a very square college in Maine), it was coed—long before many other schools. The situation was rough; as soon as you had dated a girl three or four times, it was very hard to switch (although there was some switching, mainly in the freshman year). By the time you were a sophomore or a junior, you were going steady with some female at Bates and that was *it*. If it didn't work out, well it was very tough; always just *one* person.

It has changed quite a bit now. In the current Bates environment, there are many girls and fellows who never have a date in their college years, because they're shy or lack confidence. Or a boy might reject a girl because of her looks. It's all very silly. To me education is *not* grading. If you have a BA in some field of liberal arts and you don't go to graduate school, what is the purpose of that education? Not to teach you a job; you learn that very readily doing it, whether running a business or laying bricks, you can apprentice for that. But four years of contact with thinking people, your own peers, *this* is an experience that every male and female should have in this society. The chance to rebel, to re-evaluate, to do what colleges have been doing and I hope they continue to do—to be the only critical element in society with enough time to sit back and think.

REASON: How do you view masculinity and femininity? Is there a fundamental difference or has society made it all up?

RIMMER: We have social roles we put on people. The *old* masculine role for men is John Wayne. And yet at least some people realize there is a vast mixture of "masculinity" and "femininity" in each person. The whole idea of sex roles is manufactured at the time a person is born. It's amazing how quickly a baby begins to realize she's a girl or he's a boy. And different because of that—in the way one is handled and treated. Is there something beyond the social? Yes, the physical. I'm very heterosexual, although a lot of people are for bisexuality. I like men and enjoy men, but for physical contact I would not be much interested in them.

I think Women's Liberation is a very good thing. Mostly it is time the males were reeducated. That's one of the things I think would occur at a Harrad. The males and females would be *educated* together. One of the horrible things about *WOMEN AT YALE* is the number of men who still want a wife as a *social adornment*, passive, capable of entertaining but secondary to him.

REASON: What do you think are the most promising recent signs of liberalizing attitudes toward sex?

RIMMER: The whole mood of relaxation. We're approaching it very much more easily. I don't believe in censorship, but I believe in a counter approach. You build back what is being ripped down in "pornography." You can build back from childhood the wonder in just the fact that you're *alive*. In a technological society, you tend to lose that. And you can lose it in sex, in the mechanical approach to it. That's why in my books the people make love for an extended period of time, *and they talk*. So the act of love isn't a 20-minute or half-hour affair but hours or a whole evening of communing with each other.

REASON: Bruno Betelheim, in *CHILDREN OF THE DREAM*, suggested that people need an outside agent, an enemy or oppressor, that the only way people get communion is by having this type of outside force. Is that correct? Without a threat can people get together and have communion as they do in your books?

RIMMER: Oh, yes, they certainly can, but you have to create a new environment of people. This is why I'm a futurist and a utopian in a sense. As a practical man I'd say "Obviously a tragedy pushes people together." But that need not be. People can be taught this sense of joy and wonder—I don't know how else to express it—it's an interaction. A group of people can pursue something, say in a seminar, and really be supportive.

I spoke to the American Association of Marriage Counselors (what a hung-up group—they're as bad as the people they counsel) and I said, "I think you can learn to be defenseless..' That's why I recommend *THE TRANSPARENT SELF*. It's self-disclosure, the ability to really let yourself go with someone, that will produce a positive response in the same way. Eventually you don't do it as a conscious act anymore; it becomes a part of your personality. You're not afraid any more of being whatever you are. I think it can be taught. Children have it. If you

NEW MARRIAGE STYLES

There is not a wealth of literature on alternatives to conventional monogamy, but what there is is interesting. The April 1970 issue of *THE FUTURIST* was largely devoted to the topic of the future of women and marriage. It contained such articles as "The Future of the Family," "Where is Marriage Going?" "Will Women Become Counterfeit Men?" and "Living Together: An Alternative to Marriage." The October 1971 issue of the same journal contains a major article by sociologist Leo Davids, entitled "North American Marriage: 1990." Davids extrapoltates from today's trends and predicts legalized trial marriages, group marriages, contractual childless marriages, and many changes in child-raising—such as required parent-training courses and conception licenses.

Finally, a challenging new book called *THE FAMILY IN SEARCH OF A FUTURE*, edited by Herbert Otto, presents the views and proposals of a number of leading social scientists, including Margaret Mead and Harold Greenwald. Among the many ideas discussed are acceptance of "serial monogamy" as the norm, legalized group marriage, student marriages, "intimate networks" of familes, specialized parents-for-hire, and parties to celebrate stages of sexual development such as loss of virginity.

watch children, they're completely open with you. I don't know where the closure comes from.

REASON: Don't public schools seem to close people off a lot?

RIMMER: They certainly do!

REASON: If you're going to have sex education, say, or this awareness education, in a school, maybe you run the risk of destroying the natural openness in children. Is there some other way this can be taught, not through the medium of public schools?

RIMMER: Only if you have very enlightened families. A friend of ours has three children—the boys are eight and six and the girl is four. She's taught them very calmly about sex, so that the daughter refers to her vulva and her brothers' penises. She's really refreshing—I hope I'll be around to see her grow up—her relationship to sex is going to be very wholesome, I would think. Of course, whether the peer group of her environment will shut her out, I don't know. Or some boy who was brought up in that 50% who doesn't get that kind of exposure is going to look at her and think she's a horrible woman.

REASON: Going back to what you said before about defenselessness, your books indicate that you think this is an essential feature of meaningful human relationships. But defenses exist in those places where another person isn't meeting our standards—the defenses protect us from having to condone or accept substandard behavior. How are we to have defenseless relationships if a person fails to meet even one of our expectations?

RIMMER: You're saying, in a sense, that I couldn't be defenseless because I would be asking you to measure up to whatever I was. But by being defenseless what I would mean is that I would also be non-critical in the sense of evaluating you against whatever standards I might have. And I would really be trying to do something else—I would be trying to move over to you, trying to see things from your perspective. I'm asking in return the same thing, knowing that I'm not going to get it in many cases, but it doesn't make any difference either. By the very fact that it doesn't make any difference if I don't get it, then I have insulated myself a little against hurt. In other words, so I'm defenseless with you and you use my defenselessness in a way to clap me on the head with it. But, so, OK, I don't care. It takes a certain amount, like my wife says, "I takes a *fantastic* amount of ego, and you've got the ego to do it, and other people don't have that ego to do it."

REASON: Could you be critical of someone at the same time that you're defenseless with that person?

RIMMER: Well, you might come to me with a political point of view and I'll be serious because it's a matter of life and death. But then in the process I would try to work toward an understanding. And I would try to let you know, even though I'm arguing and I'm really trying to prove a point of view, that it doesn't get down into a point of personality with me. It's an abstract topic, it's *out there* and you and I are working on this problem out there, and if you approach it differently from the way I do, it's *still* out there.

I don't judge your approach as a person, I don't *hate you* because of your viewpoint or I don't dislike you because of your viewpoint. In most discussions, in most arguments, in most disagreements between people, an awful lot of the time *personalities* become the subject, rather than the topic allegedly under discussion. They are hating each others' personalities, and I see this in more interpersonal relationships. I always wonder, "Why are they doing this?" It's silly. They're not trying to find an answer, they just want to kill each other. Whereas I would be more likely to approach any kind of problem relationship as if we're both on a voyage of discovery to find out what it is that's out there.

REASON: Do you think that jealousy toward a person can be compatible with love for that person?

RIMMER: Not really. I think jealousy is a very destructive thing; it's destructive to the person who's jealous. I think it's learned and I think it can be unlearned. It can be unlearned a lot faster with children if they're brought up right, but I think even an older person can unlearn it. Just as I also think that the act of sex is learned and sex potentials are learned. If a person, for instance, were never exposed to any sexual stimulus whatsoever, he would have to *learn* to respond to somebody else, and in the process of learning to respond he or she would do better if they knew how to learn.

REASON: So jealousy could be avoided in a corporate marriage? If people were willing to reeducate themselves?

RIMMER: I would think the minute four people get together (or six—I put a limit on it on the basis of numbers) that the essential thing is that, if at any one point the four people in the group begin to think their egos are more important than the others', then the group by itself is going to come apart. So let's say you do have twinges of jealousy; you know, I'm not so holy that I couldn't be jealous. Let's say that I'm in a group and I have a feeling of jealousy—I'm burned up at some reaction of somebody to me. What I say the person can learn to do is "second-thought" that reaction. And so, the moment he has that feeling, before he blows it, he can stand aside, even if he *has* blown it, he can stand aside and listen to himself. He can imagine that, over here is not a censor but a calmer person looking at this, not exploding but saying, "Really, this is silly," and "Really, I like these people and I don't want to hurt them; I've got to get it out of my system."

So almost simultaneously, you blow, you are sorry, and you tell them. You're not afraid to do this. I think you can't go around with a pent-up feeling of hatred and be a whole character, because you're repressing, you're going to have emotions—it would be a very dull situation if you didn't have. I'll tell you something. Up in the 5 & 10 they sell vinyl balls, you can blow them up like a beach ball, only they're even lighter. They sell them as a punching bag. If you blow them up and have a bunch of those . . . . I have the best damn encounters, because you can really throw them with all your force and you can bang someone on the head with one and they'll bounce, they don't hurt you. But you can get rid of an enormous amount of aggression with them.

REASON: We used to have pillow fights to accomplish the same thing.

RIMMER: Right, it's the same thing.

REASON: Many people use drugs of one sort or another, sometimes as escape, others just to relax. What are your thoughts on drugs?

RIMMER: Well, I can't say that I'm 100% against drugs because I drink and smoke grass. I don't see anything wrong as long

as either is used in moderation. Incidentally, I bring that into my new novel which will be published in January called *THURSDAY, MY LOVE*. It has a section in which a man my age grows grass, and then his kids get arrested. So what can I say? I wouldn't try heroin and I don't think LSD interests me particularly. There's one thing about grass I'm sure of (as I'm sure about alcohol) and that's that it's a nice temporary escape if I want a temporary escape.

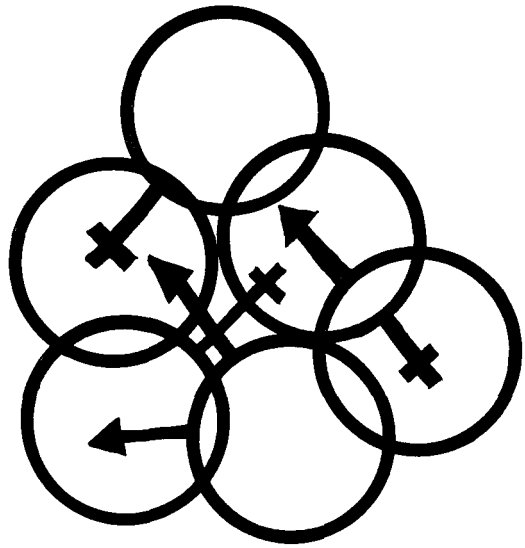
And the rest of it, it's like I said in *YOU AND I, SEARCHING FOR TOMORROW*, I can get turned on by Glenn Gould playing Bach sometimes as much as from smoking grass, or just sitting looking at the sky, or watching the trees. So I think that we can teach people to get high in many natural ways.

REASON: You are a successful entrepreneur in two fields—printing and writing. What do you think of business and the market economy?

RIMMER: Well, maybe we're approaching a society—and I have a suspicion that we may be—that isn't so caught up in accumulation. People are starting to find that crass materialism, chasing after a new automobile every two years, is kind of weird. I read somewhere that Ben Franklin said many, many years ago that if we applied labor correctly, man would only have to work about three days a week. But yet on the other hand, Nixon comes out and says we're going back on the same old system; we're going to build the society up by producing more automobiles, so everybody's going to get more employment! Ultimately, would it be better to have a society where you produced an automobile that would last ten years and you didn't chase your head off to have a new car every two years (or a new style, that's all you're really getting) and approach some of these things for what they really are, rather than the image aspects.

REASON: If people adopt some other pursuit, other than production and consumption, what do you think it will be?

RIMMER: That's a big question. If you don't have a basically educated people, probably all you can do is keep them working; otherwise they will end up building bigger Coney Islands and taking very vapid leisure. They won't know how to use the leisure they've got anyway. There will be more murders, more killings, more everything, because they're simply so bored.



REASON: There should be some way people could use their leisure creatively.

RIMMER: Yes, but you're going to have to start at the root and reeducate much of the society to do it.

REASON: Many of the letters in *HARRAD LETTERS* and *YOU AND I* mentioned having as favorite authors, aside from yourself, Ayn Rand and Robert Heinlein. What is your reaction to their works and to the philosophies they represent?

RIMMER: Well, you know, Rand and I are in some areas very close together, and in others—in what she means by the basic selfishness of the individual, in terms of accomplishing an altruistic approach by means of being completely selfish—we're *far apart*. It comes down to the Fritz Perls philosophy of "you do your thing and I'll do my thing and we may never know each other but that's all right and if we do, OK," which is not the way I think the society has to go. That kind of a philosophy won't make it in the kind of world we're coming into.

REASON: What about Robert Heinlein?

RIMMER: I wrote in one of my books that Heinlein should write a book of non-fiction, and I really think he should. Let's take *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND*. I think the philosophy is great but not applicable to "here and now." In a sense, *HARRAD* is science fiction; so is *PROPOSITION 31*. At least they have more *potential of existing* than anything in *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND*. And yet the ideas that he's thrown in there are fantastic! The other thing that disappoints me about Heinlein is that I have heard from at least four different sources, people who have tracked him down, that he tells them, "This is just a book, forget it; I don't really believe this anyway."

REASON: That may just be his way of avoiding being dragged into public controversy.

RIMMER: But he isn't doing much in terms of what he *could* do, if he really believed it. And yet his philosophy in *STRANGER* certainly seized *your* generation and he's put words like *grok* and *water-brother* into the vocabulary. He sensed a feeling, a need.

REASON: In a later book, called *THE*

MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS, he brings in his philosophy, which is libertarian, in a fairly straightforward way. And I think it's less of a put-on than *STRANGER*. Have you read that?

RIMMER: Yes, I liked that. Particularly because he was advocating line marriage, which is another form of a corporate marital arrangement. I really think he ought to write a book of non-fiction. If he wants to sell something and really say something—because he's said so much through fiction that he ought to—he must have all kinds of ideas about *this* society.

REASON: Looking over your career as a writer, how do you view what you have achieved?

RIMMER: You know, I look in the mirror and say, "Well, did I write books? I don't believe it." It isn't a question that I think I have achieved so much—the achievement has been personal; in a sense, I found a way of expressing myself. I don't even know if the recognition is vastly important, but I do think that each person needs some way to express his feelings or emotions. When I came out of the Army, I took up painting because I had been in India for a long time. One fellow I knew there was the happiest guy I've ever seen. He did water colors and he must have come home with a hundred that he did of India. People would try to buy them from him, but he was just expressing himself. He was involved; he wasn't like a lot of them sitting around playing cards or drinking or just sweltering in the heat. I think that for my own life, I would be very unhappy if I never found some way to express myself—writing or painting.

One of the things that really bugs me in this country is spectator sports—pro football and basketball and baseball. I'd rather see a guy get out on the lot and play baseball or basketball with some friends. But to sit in the goddamn bleachers with a can of beer or to sit in front of a television set and watch that junk, I think that's sad.

REASON: Who are your own personal heroes?

RIMMER: Well, I don't know—I can't think of any. I guess I'm not a hero worshipper.

REASON: Not as a personality, but from your reading, who do you respect or admire the most?

RIMMER: Oh, I would say Abe Maslow, of course he's dead now, and Rollo May. I suppose I'm somewhat existentialist in viewpoint. I get a laugh out of Vonnegut. You know, I'd like to live my life like Picasso. I would almost pick him for a hero! He's sort of insanely nutty—he's great!

REASON: It's been very enjoyable talking with you. Thanks very much. □

poems

WATCHING HIM SLEEP

He turns. Shadows spill from his face
and trickle down his neck.
He turns. Tangled in blankets,
he is touching young . . .
a child never taught of pain.

I want to hold him.
I want his hands touching me.

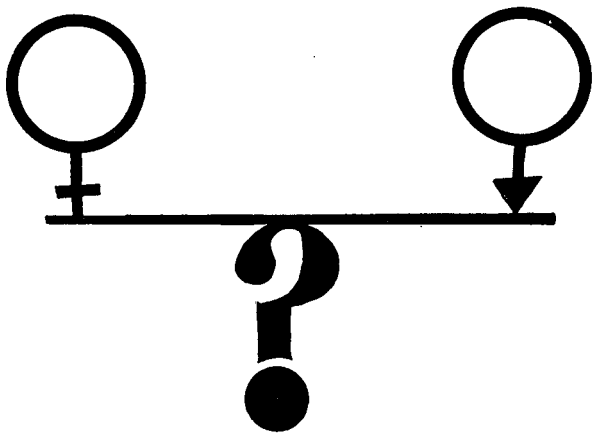
I whisper his name.
He smiles in his sleep.

Wendy McElroy

FOR MY LOVER SLEEPING

Uneasy, you stir in sleep,
a stranger wandering through some half forgotten once,
your body all disjointed, sprawled
like some wingless incoherent bird
flapping vainly at the pillow peak.
That symmetry of breast and thigh
and shoulder strewn with tangled hair
cannot recall the storm that strove
to break the bonds imposed by flesh,
for sleep can cover all,
and does,
and will.
Alone in our together world,
I sift our love from past and yet to be
and try to pluck this precious now from out of time.
But the church bells toll.
Darling, when the morning comes,
we'll leap and laugh and shake our fists at death.
But here, now, lying naked and not knowing when,
I rage, for while you sleep you die.
And so we'll put a bold face on,
and knowing, never speak of this,
and cling to each, together rise
to find a world of triumph in each other's eyes.

Robert P. Baker



equality and the sexes

tibor machan

Our culture is too hung up about what is male and what is female, too quick to assert that there is a man's function and a woman's function and never the twain shall meet. There are functions which men and women easily can share and which they should share. We need to recognize that each of us has within himself the capacity for some male and some female satisfactions. Women can revel in commercial maneuvering, and men can find joy in cooking, in furnishing a house, in feeding and cuddling a baby.

—From an article in *PSYCHOLOGY TODAY* by Dr. Edward J. Bloustein.

I bet everyone has thought about the proposition that there is natural equality between the sexes. Most educated people pay lip service to the idea that women and men are not necessarily different as far as mental capacities are concerned. Sure, men and women are different; but so are different men different. Yet the notion that the nature of womanhood differs in essentials from that of manhood in matters of the mind (we know about the body, of course) strikes our liberal sentiments off center. If only women try hard, they can be just as brilliant, rational, and creative as men have managed to be. And, of course, men could be just as emotional, gullible, and temperamental as women are reputed to be. The recurring and predominant difference is thought to be accidental.

This is what we think or say we think—when we are being watched. But deep down, in our "honest guts," most of us believe otherwise. We *feel* certain that there is something, must be something, different about women and men other than what makes us mothers and fathers, respectively. Excepting a few freak cases, e.g., Margaret Mead, we *feel*, though we will say so only privately, that men are the superior sex; we *feel*—especially we males—that the advantages gained on us by women are due to devious methods, lack of virtue, or whatnot but by no means due to superior intellect. At least most of us believe this. Lately even some experts—psychologists and sociologists, the "methodless scientists"—have come forth with elaborate theses as to the biological and psychological basis of this difference. The deep-seated prejudice in favor of fundamental intellectual differences between the sexes has conquered some of our intellectuals to the point where the feeling is now assuming scientific respectability. Needless to say, the scientific jargon does not permit terms such as "superior" and "inferior." It puts the matter differently, namely, in terms of "intellectual *versus* emotional." But of course this amounts to the same thing: men are more suited to cope with the world than are women; which means, men are superior.

But has anyone gone beyond attempting to justify the prejudice: first, our democratic prejudice in favor of equality, then our "romantic" prejudice in favor of inequality? Not really. The biological and statistical bases for upholding either dogma are absent. Biology alone can offer no grounds for embracing either thesis, and statistics cannot be provided due to the immensity of the relevant variables. Since the influence of religion, law, and custom—all of which have much to do with arbitrariness and fiat—has more than its share of responsibility for the way social habits and roles develop, we are not in a position to consider the matter statistically (our most favored tool in popular sociology and in the not-so-popular one, also). We are, therefore, left with armchair speculation, philosophical reasonings, or musings. And I shall embark on these now, in an attempt to get clear on this supposed difference of equality between the sexes.

Man has sought out woman, and vice versa, for centuries, so the circumstances of the sexes haven't changed much. Some form of companionship, brief or lengthy, has always been the object of the search. But in the course of these periods of companionship, decisions affecting both parties have had to be made. Who shall

have the tail of the beast, who the head? Such used to be the questions, way back. Now it sounds more like: will we go to Canada or Mexico next year? Or, should Johnny go to Harvard or Yale? In all cases, companionship breeds the need for answers to questions, solutions to problems.

At any rate, since men and women get together, and since togetherness brings a need for answers, decisions have to be made. And here is where the problem arises. Who's gonna make the decisions? Oh, yes; we will decide on the basis of evidence, reason, rational argument, science, etc. Fine. This would be just dandy—provided we knew what these are all about. Clearly, human history is replete with failures at trying to find standards for good judgment. Mostly, except for the physical sciences, we have failed at these attempts. What is good? What is right? Who is good? What makes for evil? Surely none of these questions has been handled scientifically; and surely none appears to be open to rational consideration, at least not just yet.

In the companionship of men and women, the problems which arise and the questions which have to be answered are mostly of the form related above. Because man has failed at providing himself with reasonable standards for the answering of such questions, companionships get undermined in their attempts at harmony whenever matters of such nature are confronted. But the decisions still have to be made. So who will decide? The stronger, the bigger, the more threatening will. Since reasonable agreement is not likely with conditions being what they are in the intellectual department, decisions must be made in accordance with the capacity to enforce them.

In our history we see numerous inequalities between man; these inequalities are usually between segments of the population which must co-operate in some areas of their lives. Thus, for example, in the military the planners rule those who must carry out the plans; in the clergy similar polar positions can be detected; in government we can see how people on various levels assume roles which necessitate final judgment in some areas. In short, as long as the basis of human decision cannot be found in reason—in our ability to come to a rational agreement, understanding of what has to be done—in most situations involving co-operation there will be the *rulers* and the *ruled*.

Since man's history experiences periodic upheavals of rationality, the ground for equality does, on these occasions, become firmer. At these upheavals there occurs a breakdown of the ruler/ruled relationship. All kinds of slavery dissolve; groups, united by racial, sexual, religious, economic, or other characteristics, demand equal treatment as to their capacity to make decisions. This demand meets with a level of success that is directly proportionate to the degree of respect which rationality—that is, the adherence to standards of judgment which are justified logically—is gaining. On these occasions those who have been judged (prejudged, actually) inferior can demonstrate their intellectual abilities; since the standards of excellence are objective (not decreed by God or the king) the fact of sexual, racial, or other kinds of equality becomes evident through empirical evidence. Since the physical sciences have long relied on such objective standards, this equality has gained its respect from those involved in science, those who see members of the "inferior" groups perform.

So, when we get to the area of values, an area where most people proclaim the impotence of reason, the need for the ancient inequalities remains. Here, where decisions still have to be made—decisions affecting parties to co-operation and companionship—the possibility of objective standards for judgment has been viewed with pessimism for as long as man has existed. Today, especially, values are all said to be the province of individual, subjective feelings. As the saying goes, "Your bag is your bag, mine is mine—you do your thing and I'll do mine"; which means, don't presume that your standard of right, good, and the like applies to anyone but you. Absolutism in ethics is confused with authoritarianism: therefore, since all of us have had enough of authoritarianism in the past few decades, we must reject the suggestion that morality is universal, applicable to all men.

But morality enters into the daily decisions of every companionship. Wherever men and women are found, there will be plenty of chances for answering moral questions, solving moral problems. So long, however, as these problems cannot be approached reasonably, so long as each question has a different answer by the various parties involved, the need to provide an answer or a solution fitting for all involved can only be met by the application of authority, backed up by force or its threat. This is why in all man/woman relations we immediately look for the boss. We know that the situation calls for moral decisions; we "know" (firmly believe) that these decisions cannot be agreed upon; so we conclude that someone has to be the arbitrary ruler, the person who can enforce his moral sentiments.

In effect, then, the authoritarianism we feared from moral absolutism (the view that there is a standard of morality applicable to all members of the species) pops up as a result of the relativism and subjectivism. This is true even in governmental systems: where no one can *know* (or prove) what is right, someone will simply get the physical strength to enforce his feelings, his subjective views. Dictatorships are born out of moral uncertainty, moral "agnosticism."

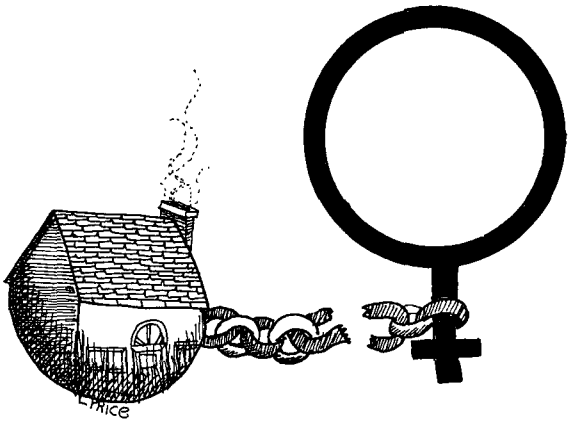
No, it is not true that by nature men and women are intellectually different; neither is superior to the other by virtue of sex, though, to be sure, individual differences in intellect between various people do exist. Our feeling that men are superior is derived from a tradition of male authority; our lack of deep, rationally based conviction that the sexes are equal stems from the absence of a standard to demonstrate this equality in the areas where we have most to do with one another, romance and family. While in business, education, science, etc., women may indeed have demonstrated their equality, in the home, in crises involving morals, they cannot do so simply because few of us recognize any standards of excellence in moral reasoning.

When deep "in our guts" we think that women are inferior, that they are more emotionally disposed, that they have lesser intellectual capacity than men, it would be good to check the grounds for such thinking. Where do the examples of woman's inferiority arise? In what circumstances do women find themselves helpless? How does it happen that they give in, at times?

Perhaps, after rethinking the matter in its full context, we will work on those areas which prevent us from making the equality of capacity work to the fullest. In fact, we might see to it that moral decisions need not be made by fiat but in accordance with reason. There is little question in my mind that under such conditions women will be able to demonstrate their equality without threatening the position of the male—a position which he has gained by default by his superior strength and which he is losing not to reason but to the social *power* women are slowly acquiring. Instead of switching the role of superior/inferior, hopefully we might do away with these categories altogether in favor of rationality. □

freedom's a long time coming

lynn kinsky



> Every one of the subjects lives under the very eye, and almost, it may be said, in the hands, of one of the masters– in closer intimacy with him than with any of her fellow-subjects; with no means of combining against him, no power of even locally overmastering him, and, on the other hand, with the strongest motives for seeking his favour and avoiding to give him offense. In struggles for political emancipation, everybody knows how often its champions are bought off by bribes, or daunted by terrors. In the case of women, each individual of the subject-class is in a chronic state of bribery and intimidation combined. [1]

Ti-Grace Atkinson, Valerie Solanis? No—actually the above quote is from the first pro-feminist essay written by a man. The essay is also the first (and almost the only!) pro-feminist essay written by a libertarian—the author being none other than John Stuart Mill and the essay, *ON THE SUBJECTION OF WOMEN*, written in 1861 and published in 1869. [2]

It's an ironic commentary on the state of the two "movements" that *SUBJECTION* and *ON LIBERTY* have become virtually required reading in the Women's Liberation movement [3], which largely grew out of the New Left [4], but that *SUBJECTION* is either unknown or ignored among libertarians! Certainly it's desirable to have feminists reading such thoughts as:

> The modern conviction, the fruit of a thousand years of experience, is, that things in which the individual is the person directly interested, never go right but as they are left to his own discretion; and that any regulation of them by authority, except to protect the rights of others, is sure to be mischievous. [5]

But it would also be nice to see libertarians working for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment [6] to the Constitution, the substance of which Mill argued for in 1869! In fact, it would be nice simply to see such libertarian theorists as Ayn Rand [7] and Murray Rothbard [8] consider feminism at all positively! However, Mill had encountered such situations and offered this comment:

> He who would rightly appreciate the worth of personal independence as an element of happiness, should consider the value he himself puts upon it as an ingredient of his own. There is no subject [other than feminism] on which there is a greater habitual difference of judgement between a man judging for himself, and the same man judging for other people. When he hears others complaining that they are not allowed freedom of action—that their own will has not sufficient influence in the regulation of their affairs—his inclination is, to ask, what are their grievances? what positive damage they sustain? and in what respect they consider their affairs to be mismanaged? and if they fail to make out, in answer to these questions, what appears to him a sufficient case, he turns a deaf ear, and regards their complaint as the fanciful querulousness of people whom nothing reasonable will satisfy. But he has quite a different standard of judgment when he is deciding for himself. [9]

It is this currentness that makes Mill so exciting to read (if also somewhat depressing when one realizes how little has changed in 103 years!). Of course, the sections where he talks about women owning property are dated, since in the United States women may now own and dispose of porperty without their husbands' having any claim on it, at least if the property was acquired prior to marriage. In fact, the situation now is that a wife has considerable claim on her husband's property (due to laws passed by male legislators). Mill also deals with the question of women's suffrage, essentially a dead issue outside of Switzerland (last year women were finally permitted to vote in federal elections, but they are still disenfranchised in many cantons), and a few minor countries. However, the bulk of his essay deals with societal attitudes toward women, attitudes of women toward themselves, the effects of socialization into the feminine role, legal and professional discrimination against women, and the qualities of an ideal marriage—subjects very much under discussion today.

(However, Mill has an advantage over most of the feminists writing today in that he is writing from a consistently libertarian position, and, perhaps more importantly, in that he is a man and hence not the direct recipient of the attitudes that he attacks. Being the victim of discrimination is very frustrating but righteous indignation per se has never convinced anyone; indeed, it seems to

amuse most people! Unless one possesses a particularly cool vindictiveness, anger only seems to interfere with rational argumentation.)

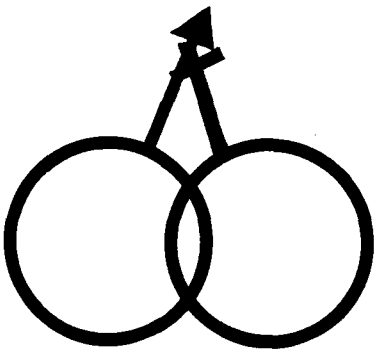
One of the first issues Mill considers is the question of feminine nature. Can one say what is feminine or unfeminine? Mill answers with a thorough **NO!**

> Standing on the ground of common sense and the constitution of the human mind, I deny that anyone knows, or can know, the nature of the two sexes, as long as they have only been seen in their present relation to one another. If men had ever been found in society without women, or women without men, or if there had been a society of men and women in which the women were not under the control of the men, something might have been positively known about the mental and moral differences which may be inherent in the nature of each. What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing—the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others. [10]

> Of all difficulties which impede the progress of thought, and the formation of well-grounded opinions on life and social arrangements, the greatest is now the unspeakable ignorance and inattention of mankind in respect to the influences which form human character. Whatever any portion of the human species now are, or seem to be, such, it is supposed, they have a natural tendency to be: even when the most elementary knowledge of the circumstances in which they have been placed, clearly points out the causes that made them what they are. [11]

In this Mill gets at the crux of much of the controversy surrounding Women's Liberation: namely, feminists' contention that not only are certain laws and employment practices discriminatory but that the whole social structure needs overhaul to the extent that it represses the rational, and the independent, and the productive in women and encourages irrational, dependent, and non-productive personalities. Not surprisingly, many women view socialization into what is now defined as the feminine role as oppressive [12] because it goes against their needs as persons. However, as Mill indicates, ignorance compounds the *inherent difficulty of the situation*. When the people you're trying to convince think everything is right and natural *now*, change is hard to accomplish!

To use an illustration, anyone who has ever tried to use reason in a milieu (religious or otherwise) where faith or conformity is the norm should appreciate the feeling of being pressured in an unconscionable direction. And there's not even any one person or situation that one can blame or say "STOP!" to! A set of expectations, emotional responses, etc. is disturbingly vague, and challenging it is very difficult, especially if one has been exposed to these pressures since infancy. And then to be told that it is normal and human to have faith (with, of course, the implication of sickness in the opposite) because everyone does, when it is obvious



they have faith because it was one of the first lessons taught in infancy; with the reply that nothing was *taught*, the infant was just treated like a human being—is a rather frustrating experience!

(That's if a person bothers to question. Objectivists and other libertarians should be among the first to conceed that most people are happy with the status quo. If people can accept the role of the FDA and FCC as natural and right when these agencies have existed less than 70 years, it should come as no surprise that people would be hostile towards changing customs and attitudes that have existed far longer—and possibly with no more justification.)

In discussing femininity Mill does not consider the Argument from Underwear—disappointing in view of the Argument's prominence in current discussions of feminism but understandable in view of the bra's not having been invented until 1922! [14] One can only wonder what his reaction would be to a society that takes an event that never occured [15], elevates its imagined occurence into a symbol denoting a mixed bag of psychological, philosophical, and sociological ideas, and then by means of one element of that symbol attempts to define any particular person's sexuality and views on a very complex issue! "well, I wear a bra!"—"So? Are you a better person for it? Does it make you feminine? Do you perhaps own stock in Maidenform? However, now that we've determined your tastes in undergarments perhaps we can discuss more important issues."!

Mill does, however, deal with two other issues that always seem to crop up when the nature of women is being discussed. The first has to do with women's supposed emotional fragility [16] which is said to send them into a dither at the slightest disturbance. One of the most famous recent exponents of that doctrine was Dr. Edgar Berman, Hubert Humphrey's physician, who got considerable publicity last year when he asserted in a speech to the Democratic Party's Committee on National Priorities that hormonal imbalances resulting from the menstrual cycle and menopause rendered women unfit for positions of high responsibility. In particular he questioned if a menopausal woman would have been able to handle the Bay of Pigs incident! [17]

Hormones were unknown in Mill's time—the syndrome attributed now to "female problems" was then called "nervous sensibility." Mill considered that a nervous temperament could be inherited and conceded that women were probably more prone to such a temperament than men.

> We will assume this as a fact: and let me then ask, are men of nervous temperament found to be unfit for the duties and pursuits usually followed by men? If not, then why should women of the same temperament be unfit for them? The peculiarities of the temperament are, no doubt, within certain limits, an obstacle to success in some employments, though an aid to it in others . . . .

> It is evident that people of this temperament are particularly apt for what may be called the executive department of the leadership of mankind. They are the material of great orators, great preachers, impressive diffusers of moral influence. Their constitution might be deemed less favorable to the qualities required from a statesman in the cabinet, or from a judge. It would be so, if the consequence necessarily followed that because people are excitable they must always be in a state of excitement. But this is wholly a question of training. [18]

In other words, are there People or are there Men and Women? And is any particular characteristic one has because of one's sex to be a handicap by definition or is it something one has a person and hence learns to cope with as part of reality? Many more men than women get gouty arthritis and only men are hemophiliacs—does that not suggest, if women are to be disapproved for positions of responsibility because they are "nervous," that men shouldn't be surgeons, since they are so prone to disabling arthritis and might bleed to death if a knife cut them, besides? Women are also discriminated against in business because they have wombs and hence *might* have children [19] which would prevent them from working for a few months—but men in all age groups have a higher accident and coronary death rate than women. Certainly a dead employee is a greater loss to a company than one in temporary absence!

One of the accusations often hurled against feminists is that they are all lesbians and would like to form an all-female society. I've always been pleased with the consistency (if not with anything else) of the sort of men who would make such accusations—they also seem to be the ones who emphasize how different and emotional and mysterious and irrational and incompetent women are: i.e., how unlike men women are! If a man has been telling a woman for years how she is almost a different species from him, it shouldn't surprise him (and it doesn't, really: he's just outraged) that she should decide that maybe he is right and that she should seek companionship among her own kind, just as he does among his (up to now there has been no female equivalent of the "jock" or "man's man")!

Another issue concerning femininity that comes under Mill's scrutiny is that of woman's function in life:

> The general opinion of men is supposed to be, that the natural vocation of a woman is that of a wife and mother. I say, is supposed to be, because, judging from acts—from the whole of the present constitution of society—one might infer that their opinion was the direct contrary. They might be supposed to think that the alleged natural vocation of women was of all things the most repugnant to their nature; in so much that if they are free to do anything else . . . there will not be enough of them willing to accept the condition said to be natural to them . . . . I should like to hear somebody openly enunciating the doctrine (it is already implied in much that is written on the subject)—"It is necessary to society that women should marry and produce children. They will not do so unless they are compelled. Therefore it is necessary to compel them." The merits of the case would then be clearly defined. [20]

Lest one think Mill is talking through his hat, consider the laws forbidding abortion and, in many states, forbidding the sale of contraceptives, at least to younger women (Connecticut's law against *using* contraceptives was overturned in 1965 and then only on the grounds that it violated marital privacy). Tax laws favoring the married are marriage incentives to both sexes. So are public schools, the existence of which makes all the anti-feminist hoopla over day-care centers seem almost superfluous—if a child can be baby-sat at public expense from age 6 to 26, why quibble over a few more years at the lower end of the scale? [21]

In states without community property laws, a wife in a divorce action often gets nothing except the children (which the law virtually requires her to bear if the husband wants them, since she has no legal grounds for refusing intercourse with her husband save severe illness on her part, and she cannot get sterilized without her husband's permission), some child support, which is often abandoned, and some alimony, which is even oftener abandoned. In general she's been out of the job market for many years or, if working, has been in a low paying position. Not all of that is due to alleged female unambitiousness. A wife in virtually all states is required by law to maintain the home and children first, and then if she has the time and energy she may take a job. [22] Mother-love aside,

THE RIGHT TO AN ABORTION

Now that 17 states have liberalized their anti-abortion laws, popular attitudes are changing rapidly. An Opinion Research Corporation survey reported that 49% of those polled in a recent survey (men and women over 16) *favor* unrestricted abortion, 42% opposed. Only three years ago 80% was opposed when the same question was asked. But suppose you—or someone you know—needs an abortion. Where do you go? What do you do? Whom can you ask?

Three nationwide groups providing reliable referral service are Planned Parenthood, Zero Population Growth, and Clergy Consultation Service. These groups have affiliates in most large cities, but their New York offices will handle general requests and refer people to local assistance. The groups' New York telephone numbers are: PP (212-677-3040), ZPG (212-489-7794), and CCS (212-477-0034). ZPG has a computerized abortion data service at its Los Altos, California, headquarters.

The most "open" states are New York and Washington with no restrictions, Hawaii and Alaska with 90 and 30-day residence requirements, and Kansas and California with fairly liberal laws, liberally interpreted. The worst states are Utah, New Jersey, North and South Dakota, and Iowa. Costs can be as low as $150-300 in New York, where abortions are often performed on an outpatient basis. Thus, under present conditions, any woman who needs an abortion should be able to obtain one without too much difficulty.

the result of a divorce is very often that the partner least able economically to maintain a family is the one required to do it. Certainly such situations tend to keep bad marriages together. [23]

Then there are the pressures to get married. Keeping one's virginity for one's husband is still a popular idea ("Is it safe for young girls to use Tampax?"); contraceptive information and, with the exception of foam and rubbers, the contraceptives are hard to obtain for minors; and abortions and the morning-after pill are even harder to obtain. Essentially, a society that considers a 16 year old too irresponsible to vote expects the same teenager to keep very strong passions under control. A lot of kids accept the rules—they get married so they can have sex (marriage is quite easy for the girls—the age of consent is generally less than 16: *if* they are consenting to *marriage*. The age of consent for intercourse is usually at least 16!). Certainly this is true of the girls—a girl who has sex without marriage faces pregnancy and/or a trip to Juvenile Hall [24] for "being out of control," "lascivious carriage," "sexual misbehaviour," and "promiscuity" (meanwhile her partner gets prosecuted for statutory rape)! [25]

One of the most telling events supporting the suspicions Mill raises is the sound and fury generated by the possibility of the Equal Rights Amendment [see Note 6] becoming part of the United States Constitution. Sam Ervin, the great civil libertarian of the Senate has vowed to do all he can to kill the motion. Emanuel Celler has fought it tooth and claw in the House for the past twenty years. The gist of their arguments is that the Amendment rocks the boat. [26] One complaint is that the Amendment would wipe out all of the "protective" legislation women have in various states. A retort might be made that the legislation "protects" men, since in virtually every state women are forbidden to work more than a certain number of hours (however, housewives aren't included under these laws), lift more than a certain weight (generally less than that of a young child), stand more than a certain number of hours, or indulge in certain "hazardous occupations." The passage of this legislation 70 years ago is now thrown in the face of women who agitate for an equal wage [27]—employers maintain that since women can't by law do the same work as men and require extra facilities they shouldn't be paid the same as men. There is a certain logic, however frustrating, in this—but it will be interesting too see what excuses are trotted out if the protective laws are wiped out. Women chemists, at all levels of experience and academic degree (and at high enough level jobs to be "exempt" from much labor legislation), get, on the average, 75% of the salary of their male co-workers.[28] But in my six years as a lab chemist I never noticed the women doing any less work than or different work from the men. We did have a cot in our restroom, though!

In reply to the contention that there are just some things a lady shouldn't do[29], Mill provides a good answer:

> If women have a greater natural inclination for some things than for others, there is no need of laws or social inculcation to make the majority of them do the former in preference to the latter.[30]

The gallant gentleman approach, when one gets right down to it, is simply meddling in others' affairs! And what's always paraded out as the telling blow to the Amendment is the Draft Argument—"Well, if we pass that amendment, we'll have to draft women" - and all hearts melt at the thought of tender young girls slogging through the mud in Vietnam. Amendment advocates are accused, "You don't want to draft women, do you!?" What never seems to occur to anyone is that equality under the law works both ways, and there are in fact situations where women have a better deal than men! This is one situation where the men can be made equal to the women—i.e., draft *neither*! People's repugnance to women warriors goes rather deep, and it's surprising that anti-draft forces haven't been pushing the Equal Rights Amendment as a round-about way of achieving their goal!

Certainly none of this is to imply that feminism requires special privileges for women! Having control over one's own body isn't a special privilege, nor is being paid a non-discriminatory wage. Being taken seriously when saying serious things shouldn't have to count as a special privilege, nor should being raised to be rational and productive be something special. To all those people puzzled over the question "What do feminists want?"—try: to be treated as a person, with all the dignity that implies. Or, to use a phrase that far predates John Stuart Mill, Laissez-faire!

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] *ON THE SUBJECTION OF WOMEN*, Fawcett edition, p. 26. All references to this edition.

[2] Now available in paperback from Fawcett World Library, with an introduction by Susan Brownmiller, copyright 1971.

[3] Mill was first mentioned prominently in Kate Millet's *SEXUAL POLITICS* (Avon Books, 1971, pp. 88-108). She compared Mill's rationalism with Ruskin's chivalry and not surprisingly found the latter a sham. Mill himself commented on chivalry "... [women] are declared to be better than men; an empty compliment, which must provoke a bitter smile from every woman of spirit, since there is no other situation in life in which it is the established order and is considered quite natural and suitable, that the better should obey the worse." (Mill, p. 99.)

[4] Which is not to imply that all feminists are leftists! In fact, my guess is that many feminists are with the Left simply because there's no place else to go, much as atheists had trouble finding a place in the Right before Objectivism became popular.

[5] Mill, p. 33.

[6] "Equality of rights under the law should not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

[7] Ayn Rand, "The Age of Envy," *THE OBJECTIVIST*, August 1971, pp. 3-4.

[8] Murray Rothbard, "The Great Women's Liberation Issue," *THE INDIVIDUALIST*, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 1-7.

[9] Mill. p. 122.

[10] Mill, p. 37.

[11] Mill, p. 38.

[12] For a definition of this role at its most extreme, and instructions on how to achieve that "femininity," see Helen Andelin's *FASCINATING WOMANHOOD*.

[13] Mill, p. 41.

[14] At which time it was considered quite scandalous and sexually provocative!

[15] See *SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL*, ed. Robin Morgan, Vintage Books, 1970 p. 521. Sorry folks, the Atlantic City Fire Department wouldn't issue the Miss America Pagent demonstrators a burning permit . . . Honest!

[16] Its companion, the physical fragility issue, has largely become obsolete as research has shown that except for raw muscle power women (on the average) are hardier than men (on the average).

[17] An unfortunate example for him to choose, since the *man* who handled it is said by some people to have blown it. It was later revealed by Kennedy's physician (a woman!) that he was suffering from Addison's disease and that during the period of the Bay of Pigs invasion he was being treated with cortisone, a powerful and un-predictable hormone that can produce a manic psychosis as a sice-effect. Women aren't the only people who have hormones!

[18] Mill, pp. 82-83.

[19] I haven't been to a job interview yet where the fact that I'm married and childless is not regarded with great suspicion, regardless of what I say my plans are. When I get sterilized (at my age I would need about three kids for a hospital sterilization committee to take me seriously, so I have to wait a few years and hope the Pill neither fails nor kills me in the meantime), I certainly plan to get a note from my doctor for inclusion with my resume!

[20] Mill, p. 44.

[21] Obviously a libertarian could and should quibble over public schools in general, but there seems no more cause to single out a day care center than a junior high school.

[22] This wouldn't be so bad if more women realized that they are under no legal obligation to give any money earned by them to their husbands or families, since the husband's obligation is to support his family by himself.

[23] One might say that I describe one of the worst possible cases, but in any case of injustice the truly oppressed are a minority—the rest just *could* be oppressed (how many people are truly oppressed by taxes, the draft, a wage and price freeze, anti-drug laws, etc.?).

[24] Paul Lerman, "Child Convicts," *TRANSACTION*, July/August 1971, pp. 35-44.

[25] Connecticut had a beaut of a female juvenile offense until very recently—"Being in danger of falling into bad company," good for a lock-up until age 21!

[26] A spectrum of opinion is presented in last year's House debate: *CONGRESSIONAL RECORDS*, 10 August 1970, H7948-7983.

[27] Or "Equal Pay for Equal Work" as the slogan now goes. Some feminist groups are lobbying for an equal pay law, which is of course a legal interference in the employer-employee relationship. Such lobbying efforts have *no* connection with the Equal Rights Amendment *at all*, as one can see from reading the proposed amendment. Some libertarians, such as Gary North in the Januray 1971 *FREEMAN* (pp. 3-14), seem to confuse the unjustness of an equal pay *law* with the moral justness of paying people on the basis of skills and productiveness, rather than on the basis of sexual equipment, and *seem* to be saying that a woman shouldn't fight bigotry because that's the way things are and their lower wages are the result of valid market operations!

[28] "Women Chemists: concerned over rights," *CHEMICAL AND ENGINEERING NEWS*, 26 October 1970, pp. 26-28.

[29] In Washington she shouldn't be a bellhop; in Ohio a crossing watchman, pinsetter, bellhop, deliveryman, teamster, or a gas or electric meter reader! Most states, of course, have some restrictions on women working in the vicinity of alcoholic beverages.

[30] Mill, p. 44. □

poems

THE FAULT

The days were water
Flung to scorched sand
By heedless, drifting sweeps of his hand.

The years were drizzle . . .
Slowly, so swiftly
to
the
ground;
They left no prints as they ran.

Now, within a mirror,
He gapes upon a wasteland;
Nothing leading to or from
The cold, hot-sparkling sand.

He wonders why.

HE COMES

Racing across a blowing field,
Laughin at the taste of the wind.
He comes as sunrise —
Comes to me;
This man of pride
Who does not bend,
Comes and kneels to me.

And whispers my name,
like a prayer.

Wendy McElroy

what to do when the collapse comes

alastair mac leary

As I suggested in my article for the September 1971 issue of *REASON*, written before any hint of Mr. Nixon's impending wage-price freeze, a devaluation would likely be followed by a decrease in the price of silver. This followed from distinguishing the commodity from the market for the commodity. The market for silver was primarily a political entity, not an economic institution. Most of the demand for silver at the then current price was by those who thought a devaluation would be coupled with a severe monetary panic which would induce *others* to demand silver as a substitute for paper. Unfortunately for themselves, the entire subset of individuals who expected a severe dislocation to occur with devaluation had already been bidding against one another for the supply of silver.

Additionally, the subset of speculators for whom the concomitant economic controls presented a sufficient threat of collapse to substitute silver for paper—at the then current price of silver—had already purchased supplies of silver either in bullion or in futures contracts.

The devaluation came, a dislocation was only very minor, no rush by suddenly scared masses losing their confidence in paper currency ensued, and the market for silver declined. On August 13, two days before Nixon released his vote-catching economic puerility unto the world, the December 1971 contract of silver on the New York exchanged closed at $1.63/ounce. One month later it stood at $1.4040. A margined investment on Commodity Exchange is $1500; on a 10,000 ounce contract (standard), the loss would have been nearly $2000. Wonderful.

Nevertheless, there are many who believe that a severe collapse of the Western monetary system is forthcoming. Certainly rationing in a severe recession is probable. The next severe contraction will deliver the economy to government regulation in all its polyfaceted horrors—explicit production permits required to enter business, probable licensing of many more professions, controls on job changing, outlawing strikes, wages and prices determined by government boards, priority schedules for crucial goods, outlawing of the ownership of gold or silver, perhaps a limit on coins, banning foreign bank accounts, controls on leaving the United States, and so on. Production of what will be considered unnecessary consumer goods will be curtailed, if not by banning, then by extremely punitive taxes. Electric power will be reulated, and maintenance of complex equipment will be arranged by a governmental priority system, based on pseudo-concepts such as "national interest", or "justice."

Let us be frank and admit that the desire to own silver in advance of a collapse is to offer it as a black market substitute for paper. Are there better means for protecting oneself against such a collapse, perhaps profit by it, by a more effective black market activity?

There are six necessary attributes for an effective black market good:

1. The good must be widely desired.

Presumably we will be black marketeering, if not by dealing in an explicitly illegal good, then dealing outside the regulations and controls imposed. Information on the availability of the good, and the demand for a good has a cost in the real world. The more complex the structure of production, the more salient are the problems of information. Marketing and advertising are examples of information costs. Black market activity, such as illegally using silver as currency in exchange for goods), cannot obtain and offer information by these normal market activities. Finding customers therefore will depend more on secret contacts and transportation to various population centers in pursuit of a customer on one hand, a vendor on the other. Unlike advertising, these information retrieval and production methods are unwieldy, and dangerous for goods the demand for which is rare. The risk and information costs will dramatically lower the net profit of a transaction, and importantly, the flow of business will be irregular. A widely demanded good is therefore preferable. Gold and silver are not the only reasonable qualifying goods.

2. The good should be durable.

A black market good must frequently be hidden, and moved. Because the demand and supply of black market goods are

influenced by political maneuvers—including increased or lax enforcement, increased or reduced legal substitute goods, increased or decreased punishment for conviction of dealing in this particular black market good, the supply by a black marketeer must sometimes wait unsold for long periods of time. We do not really know when controls over a particular activity are to be imposed. We might have to store our black market goods a long while before a black market in the good comes into existence.

3. The good should be physically small per value of each unit. This is because storage costs are so much greater than with legal goods—one cannot rent a warehouse to store his illegal gold bullion. They must be carefully hidden, broken into separate caches, protected. Their transportation must be surreptitious.

4. The less adequate are substitutes to a black market good, the higher a premium will be paid by the user, and the greater the risk will he be willing to take to obtain the black market good. If a black market good is only slightly preferable to a legal substitute, a potential customer might well, and justifiably, decline the risk attendant to its use.

5. In a technological economy, desirability is increasingly a function of *when*. The more costly the delay in obtaining a good (which is a function of the complexity of the structure of production) the greater the desirability of obtaining it through the black market, even if it is available legally, but through a queue. And the marginally more desirable will be imperfect substitute goods.

So we may look for protection not only in black marketeering of outlawed goods, but in rationed goods, especially technologically reticular goods. A well illustrated example of this is offered by Mr. John M. Seidl in his article on loan sharking ("Let's Compete with Loan Sharks", September 1971, *REASON*). Mr. Seidl indicates that loan sharks thrive not only due to their willingness to grant high-risk loans, but also due to the timeliness of their loans—sometimes almost instantaneous.

6. Lastly, perhaps most importantly, the good should not be widely expected to be of extraordinary value to black marketeers before the imposition of controls inevitable after severe monetary difficulties and dislocation. If a particular commodity is either in vogue as a protection against devaluation or collapse, or as an expression of opposition to current monetary policies, its profitability as a good to acquire will either be reduced or eliminated by the free market discounting its future value in the present, so that the only profit remaining is at most time preference, or the current prime interest rate (in which case why not deal in a legal good!). As has just happened in the silver market, the price might be over-discounted and an actual loss occur! Competition for the opportunity to supply the good in the impending predicted black market will cause the price of the good to be bid up in the present.

Obviously point six refers to silver. Let me say parenthetically that silver is an *excellent* medium for short run speculation. Time series analysis demonstrates this fact. Silver will be a good black market commodity. But the cost of entry is to obtain silver now at very high prices. In addition to point six, but directly related to it, silver possesses an attribute which may prove to be quite deleterious. Politicians hate monetary speculators most of any black market participants, because monetary speculators in a controlled economy are the most visible advertisement of the failure of the policies of the government—that the currency is not worth what the politicians say it is, that the value of the currency will decline relative to that of less-controlled economies, that people do not trust the stability of paper and so prefer silver and gold, that governments prefer to inflate rather than to tax. The treasury department is most zealous in stopping counterfeiters. The state will allocate far more resources towards apprehending and severely punishing black market currency during economic dislocation than other types of black market activity. An example of the state's flagrant willingness to brutally punish crimes of those they dislike politically is imprisoning the late black militant George Jackson 11 years for stealing $70, while granting probation to others who steal hundreds of times that amount. Keeping in perspective the similar brutality of Communist governments in dealing with currency speculators, it is hopelessly naive to assume any but the harshest suppression of silver promoters after any economic collapse.

Silver-oriented activities will incur a risk greater per unit profit than commodities less conspicuously critical of the policy failures of government.

What am I getting at?

Fundamental theorems of mathematical economics indicate persuasively that the more complex elements in a structure of production are most affected by marginal changes in the economy. Any increase in production will occur in greater proportion in complex, rather than simple structures, and any decrease too. Any dislocations will disrupt a computer manufacturer far more than a farmer.

An economic dislocation will bring government curbs on the allocation of technology-dependent electronic equipment, maintenance of operating systems, perhaps even use of computers. The computer industry has a more elaborate and reticular structure of production than can be maintained during dislocation, depression of strict controls. IBM, at last published count, depended on 28,000 separate suppliers for constructing its machines. This typical complexity is beyond the capacities of a depressed, controlled economy. There will be severe shortages of computer parts, equipment, and competent programmers. Government and firms it deems in the "national interest", or who perform "just" activities will receive priority. Computer installations outside government approval will have difficulty obtaining needed maintenance, programming, and parts. Those who deal in black market computer programming, parts, and maintenance will probably make a fortune. The computer will be more affected by rationing than any other good. It cannot function at all, or very poorly, with a faulty part.

By all the most objective analysis I can conjure, training in repairing computers, obtaining and storing logic circuits, monolithic memories, equipment connecting the central processing unit to input-output equipment, parts to card readers, fragile parts of a tape drive that read the magnetic tapes (tape heads), and programming systems stored on magnetic tape and cards, offer the best opportunity to profit by an economic collapse in a manner least likely to excite government wrath. □

the female eunuch:
book review

barbara
turner
luce

Women's Liberation is the *cause célébre* of the decade. Naturally, we have been deluged with an outpouring of literature on the subject. Every viewpoint has been represented from the super-radical (*THE SCUM MANIFESTO, I, B.IT.C.H.*) to the moderate (*SEXUAL POLITICS*) to the conservative approach (*THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE*). Unfortunately, many of the current books lack something. Some of them are too scholarly and plodding; others are too preposterous; a few would seem to be nothing more than slightly expanded doctoral theses. But this spring a new book that was scholarly, highly readable, entertaining, and relatively consistent entered the market—*THE FEMALE EUNUCH*. The author is a tall Australian-born professor and super-groupie, Germaine Gree. Her book will have the same impact that Simone de Beauvoir's *THE SECOND SEX* had when it was first published. Both women share a similar viewpoint—i.e., that men are not the enemy, all humans are oppressed. It is imperative for us to remember that the myths that enslave women also enslave men.

Miss Greer begins her book by stating that it is part of "the second feminist wave." The suffragettes were working for basic reform; today's women radicals want revolution. The first feminists were able to effect some of their reforms, but the author tells us that "the cage door had been opened but the canary had refused to fly out." She then relates the numerous reasons why hard-won rights were treated so lightly by the majority of the female populace.

Then came the sexual revolution. Woman was transformed into Super-Chick—a decoupage of tireless and inventive lover, efficient housewife, forever-youthful sex symbol, exquisite and imaginative interior decorator, gourmet cook, fashionplate, perfect mother, *ad nauseum*. A lot of women, including myself, were irritated by the untenable position they were almost forced into. So they rebelled; some flagrantly, others imperceptibly. Miss Greer primarily addresses her book to those women who have indeed upset the myth of the "paragon of perfection."

At the outset, the author relates that "it is impossible to argue a case for female liberation if there is no certainty about the degree of inferiority or natural dependence which is unalterably female." Therefore, *THE FEMALE EUNUCH* flows logically to take us on a step-by-step tour of ourselves.

We are first confronted with our bodies. We examine our gender, bones, curves, hair, sex, and womb. Most readers will glean little new information from this section. The author intersperses her writing with bits and pieces of the works of other authors. Each inclusion is highlighted by bold type. This is one of the book's most enhancing features.

When Miss Greer dissects the soul of a women, she has the oxymoronic ability to be passionate yet intellectually detached. She first analyzes the stereotype woman, the "Eternal Feminine." Why does this myth of womanhood rule our culture? Does it not suffocate the emotions of men as well as women? Her wit shines through the pages. At one point, she concludes that "disgraced, unsexed April Ashley is our sister and our symbol." She surmises that

> April's incompetence as a woman is what we must expect from a castrate, but it is not so very different after all from the impotence of feminine women, who submit to sex without desire, with only the infantile pleasure of cuddling and affection, which is their favorite reward.

In her overview of energy, she draws from her background as a university lecturer to comment that most women students she has encountered expend their energy conforming with "disciplinary and other requirements, not in gratifying their own curiosity about the subject they are studying." She further states that this could well be the reason that women seldom make great advances and continue to assist men and work under their direction. She sympathetically tells us that "we must endeavor to understand how it is that women's energy is systematically deflected from birth to puberty, so that when they come to maturity they have only fitful resource and creativity." This is one of the most jolting points that the author makes.

Miss Greer then defines the title of her book. Women are eunuchs because they have been taught to deny the element of quest in their sexuality. All of our contacts are stunted from infancy onward. And when we finally become cognizant of our sex, "the pattern has sufficient force of inertia to prevail over new forms of desire and curiosity." In order to highlight her contention, she further states that "we will have to reject the polarity of definite terms, which are always artificial, and strive for the freedom to move within indefinite terms."

The author's analysis of how children's roles are distorted from infancy was particularly intriguing to me. My husband and I have a little boy. We are trying the best we can to raise him without the fetters of a sex role. We encourage his independence (far too much in the eyes of his grandmothers) and we refrain from feeding him the usual clichés. I nodded my head in silent agreement when I read Miss Greer's hypothesis that a "child's acquisition of all facilities is retarded tenfold or a hundredfold by the role he must play as Mother's product, her toy and her achievement." In comparing children who are a joy to both parents with those who exist almost only to give their mothers a purpose, one notices a multitude of differences. Little boys who have not been told that "boys don't cry,"

"boys are supposed to be brave," and little girls whose ears have not been taunted by the "sugar and spice" rhyme are much more gentle, less aggressive, and less apt to be frightened than other children. These children are people, not images. Miss Greer's chapter on "Baby" should be placed inside those free copies of Dr. Spock that obstetricians are forever handing out.

In a chapter entitled "The Raw Material," Miss greer makes clear that "it is known . . . that sex hormones do enter the brain, but no correlation between that physiological fact and mental capacity or behavior has ever been established, although it has been assumed." She then gives a synopsis of Eleanor Maccoby's book, *THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEX DIFFERENCES*. Girls advance more quickly than boys early in life. Then the pattern changes as society begins to form and shape each child into "feminine" and "masculine." However, it is noted that "mothers who were less nurturant towards daughters during pre-school years had the more academically successful daughters."

The chapter entitled "Womanpower" is the apex of the author's thoughts and deductions. She relates

> If women understand by emancipation the adoption of the masculine role then we are lost indeed. If women can supply no counterbalance to the blindness of male drive, the aggressive society will run its lunatic extremes at ever-escalating speed. Who will safeguard the despised animal faculties of compassion, empathy, innocence and sensuality? . . . Woman must have room and scope to devise a morality which does not disqualify her from excellence, and a psychology which does not condemn her to the status of a spiritual cripple.

Intelligence was once surmised to have served as "a direct index of the intensity of feeling." But now intelligence is thought to undermine it. A line from William Blake's "Jerusalem" serves as a reminder than once "a Tear was an Intellectual thing." But now Miss Greer writes "how sad it is for men to have feeling and thought in opposition." How tragic that our society has decreed that intelligence and creativity no longer reinforce each other! Parents are told not to despair if their child has a low I.Q. score, that he might indeed be very creative. Teachers and educators smugly tell us that intelligence and creativity don't go hand in hand. Creativity seems to be coming to the forefront again. Computers monopolize much of the vertical thinking. Miss Greer argues that this places "more and more emphasis on the creative propensities of human thought." How fortunate women are that they have escaped separation of intellect and emotion! It could ultimately be the salvation of humanity.

Miss Greer's writings on the subject of work are tainted by her socialist leanings. She contends that women are the casualties of our modified and bastardized free market system. All of her arguments are the same paltry platitudes one hears from most of the other feminists. There is nothing really new in this chapter.

The next section of *THE FEMALE EUNUCH*, "Love," is masterfully and engagingly written. In many instances, the author excels at making clichés sound refreshing and original. Of course, much of her insight is quite European. Germaine Greer likes men and willingly admits it, but she opines that the only sort of love that can be based on trust and understanding is a relationship between equals. In fact, her thoughts almost parallel the message contained in a movie entitled "My Night at Maud's." Utilization of several passages from Maslow on self-realization and love is quite effective in reaffirming the author's ideas. Maslow contends that a healthy love exists between two people who respect themselves and each other—not phony roles. Miss Greer enthusiastically endorses that viewpoint.

Anyone who agrees with the Objectivist analysis of altruism will find an ally in Miss Greer. Perhaps her most uncompromising put-down in the entire book concerns women who confuse love with altrusim. "They sacrifice what they have never had: *a self*."

As the author further dissects the images of love, she assails men and women alike for the type of situation they create for themselves in marriage. How many times have all of us heard, "We couldn't live without each other." Statements like that only indicate the eradication of one's own individuality. As Miss Greer states

> . . . both . . . have sacrificed so much of what initially made them lovable to promote the symbiosis of mutual dependence that they scarcely make up one human being between them.

Unfortunately, I have observed that women who have obliterated their uniqueness far outnumber men in a similar situation. The reason for this is all too apparent: the myths of romance and marriage.

The chapter entitled "Romance" could have been one of the highlights of *THE FEMALE EUNUCH*. Its many shortcomings are the result of Miss Greer's reliance upon feelings. She attacks the women who read "romantic fiction." Obviously, more Englishwomen read Heyer, *LOVE STORIES*, and *WOMEN'S WEEKLY* than do American women. A quick glance at the New York Times Bestseller List will indicate that the only "romantic fiction" that is heavily indulged in by American females are "gothic romances." Many of these books do not rely heavily on magic kisses, virginal white dresses, or lace handkerchiefs; they contain more mystery than kissing scenes. Nevertheless, Miss Greer makes rather sweeping statements to the effect that "a woman is never so happy as when she is being wooed!" How the author can contend this in our day of sexual revolution, when women have finally taken on the sexual ethics of men, is beyond me. She further hypothesizes that romance is the "one adventure open" to young woman and that marriage brings about the end of true romance. I rather doubt that many females still have that starry-eyes attitude. Perhaps 10 years ago, but not now!

Miss Greer's musings on the family brought out an idea that has been received favorably by several of my friends. The author states that if she had a child, she would like to group together with other mothers, rent a farm, hire a local family to maintain the house and its environs, and then come and go as she pleases. There would really be no need for fathers unless they chose to visit. The children would grow up having companionship of peers. They would also be spared the anxiety of having mothers who feel that their children are their purpose for living. They would ideally be free to become themselves—not mere extensions of their mother's frustrations. This idea is more appealing to me than that of a kibbutz.

There is some continuity with the presence of a full-time housekeeper. I would also venture to guess that many mothers would be much more interested in their offspring as a unique individual were they not tied down to them day in and day out.

In discussing relationships in the family, Miss Greer points out that the nuclear family is "possibly the shortest-lived familial system ever developed." She contrasted the single marriage family with the stem family in which the oldest male parent headed the entire household. In many cultures, this still prevails. As Margaret Mead and other anthropologists have pointed out, the children who grow up with grandfathers, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers, and sisters, as well as the traditional mother and father, are much more secure. There is always someone there to answer questions, play, commiserate. But industrialization was one of the chief causes of the decay of the stem family. As Miss Greer points out, "More and more of the functions of the large household devolved upon the state; the care of the old, of the sick, of the mentally infirm and backward." In our own generation, more and more of us want to eliminate the state from the family's own responsibilities. For some, the commune is an attempt to create once again the stem family.

In the few pages allotted to security, Miss Greer displays a finely drawn sense of awareness. She begins by assailing us for trying to buy security. While laughing at our follies, she also illustrates the pitfalls of the welfare state, which is a bit unusual since she proclaims herself to be a socialist. She tells us

> The more the state undertakes to protect a man from illness and indigence, the more it has the right to sacrifice him to the common good, to demolish his house and kill his animals, to hospitalize his children or take them into approved homes; the more government forms upon which his name appears, the more numerous the opportunities for him to be calumniated in high places.

Security is anti-life. The author quotes a young man who concludes that "security can be a killer, and corrode your mind and soul." One can almost hear his voice lower two octaves when he follows up his observation with the statement, "*but* I wish I had it." Most of us who have given it any thought must conclude that security as we know it is a trap. Women in particular are apt to consider marriage as the ultimate security. One only has to look at divorce laws to see that this sense of security is false. Miss Greer surmises that it would be best if the contractual nature of the wedding vows were made clearer. Even then, a permanent security could not be guaranteed. In this instance, the author advises that it would be best if, in all situations, people would "refuse to consider the bait of security and bargain openly. To do this a woman [or a man!] must have a different kind of security, the kind of personal security which enables her to consider insecurity as freedom."

For a woman to rise above the promises of security, it takes more than a minimal amount of self-confidence. She must remember that, when she cannot be taken for granted, her soul is her own. The author, who has obviously grappled with the problem, tells us that the woman who struggles to love from "her fullness instead of her inadequacy" may appear hard. Miss Greer encourages woman in this pursuit by gently chiding us that we all ought to remember that we were originally loved for ourselves.

Germaine Greer begins the section on "Hate" by stating that "women have very little idea how much men hate them." She illustrates her point by dissecting "pet names" that males bestow upon their female friends. Most of these endearing terms consist of baby animals and food. This point has been made by other prominent advocates of Women's Liberation. Somehow it escapes them that women, too, have been known to christen their lovers with similar names. After all, Jacqueline Onassis called her first husband "Bunny."

The author does, however, make several significant points regarding men's contempt for the women they sleep with. Oftentimes men who display such a loathing of their sex partners are at odds with their own sexuality. They create this crisis within themselves because they subject themselves to improbable situations—they categorize females into two distinct groups. There are the women they sleep with who are somewhat contemptible; there is the girl they idealize, a modern-day vestal.

The lack of esteem for the female organ is illustrated by recognition of the most common terms of derision. This often reinforces a woman's low opinion of herself. Manifestations of this can be found in woman's profound apologies for her body. Miss Greer contends that bemoaning too small or too large breasts, short legs, hefty hips, flabby buttocks is not a reflection of fashion but of dissatisfaction with our bodies. We too often overwhelm our small store of self-confidence by seeking to change what heredity has dictated.

Misery is the next topic tackled. Most of us realize the conditions that make most housewives miserable. They read the *LADIES HOME JOURNAL, MCCALLS, HOW TO BE A HAPPILY MARRIED MISTRESS*, and *FASCINATING WOMANHOOD*. Their heads teem with ideas on making hubby happier, keeping the house cleaner, raising children with a minimum of trauma. These are their goals. They are encouraged to give themselves whole-heartedly to their families. It is tantamount to telling millions of

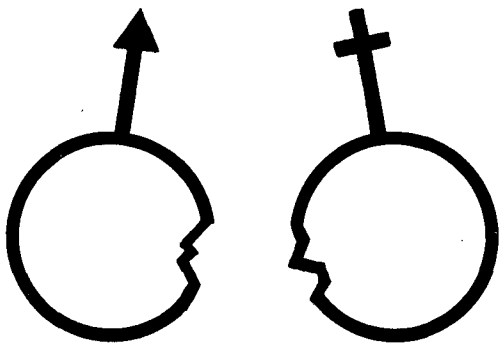
INSTEAD OF CHILDREN

Since the appearance of Betty Rollin's masterful article "The Motherhood Myth" in *LOOK*, the idea of choosing to remain childless has emerged as a respectable option. Two recent books highlight this trend and describe the advantages of this course. In *THE BABY TRAP* Ellen Peck analyzes the cultural conditioning which pushes people, especially women, into parenthood, often against their best interests. She discusses a variety of alternative lifestyles and illustrates them by examples of actual couples (including Nathaniel and Patrecia Branden). A more scholarly approach is provided in *THE CASE AGAINST HAVING CHILDREN* by Anna and Arnold Silverman, which cites a number of psychological and sociological studies to support its case.

American women to postpone their lives for twenty years. All this propaganda takes its toll on the intelligent, creative woman who happens to be a housewife and mother. Her dilemma is serious and chances are that she will remain the biggest victim.

Unfortunately, women who are not married face a different crisis. Single women are made miserable by society's pressure to get married. A wedding band would seem to signify success as a woman. Germaine Greer closes the argument by saying, "given the difficulties of marriage as a way of life, and the greater difficulties of spinsterhood, happiness must be seen by women to be a positive achievement."

Miss Greer's musings on the subject of resentment contain much talk of Pyrrhic victories. She also hypothesizes that "men usually conduct themselves with more grace than women do upon the battleground." I dispute the last point. As far as I can discern, very few people—male or female—conduct themselves gracefully in any battle. I do agree with the author on the fact that some women are so determined to "get back" at their husbands that they neglect to consider what a change of attitude could bring about. After all, a woman is less herself when revenge is her reason for living. She belongs, in fact, to the *object* of her hatred.



In analyzing "rebellion," the author relates that

> It is dangerous to eschew sex as a revolutionary tactic because it is inauthentic and enslaving in the terms in which it is now possible, when sex is the principal confrontation in which new values can be worked out.

It is also in this chapter that Miss Greer, a self-proclaimed socialist, casts doubt upon "Engels' dubious anthropology" and the radical women's love for equality—Chinese style. It is pointed out that "in China militarization of women, prohibition of cosmetics and frivolous attire" and all of the other things praised in underground newspapers did little to lessen woman's role as servant to her family. Only "the more obvious evils of concubinage were eradicated." Suspicions as to Fidel Castro's true attitude toward equality for women are highlighted by one of his speeches in which he entreats the women who fought side-by-side with men in the struggle for revolution to go back to their former roles. I am tempted to mimeograph this chapter and send it to several friends in the Women's Liberation movement who keep insisting that capitalism is the reason for the dismal situation of American women today.

The book concludes with a chapter entitled "Revolution." The first paragraph begins

> Reaction is not revolution. It is not a sign of revolution when the oppressed adopt the manners of the oppressors and practice oppression on their own behalf.

This belief was hinted at in *SEXUAL POLITICS* when Kate Millett analyzed Jean Genet's writing. But Miss Greer comes out and says it. She also utilizes this chapter to give advice. She urges women *not to marry*. She equates independence with freedom while stressing that marriage is antithetical to freedom. She tells of the plight of crumpled marriages. She realizes that married women with children pay too high a price for the freedom a divorce offers them. She ends her book by dubbing revolution "the festival of the oppressed." She urges us to become alive in the struggle.

THE FEMALE EUNUCH is memorable because it is sensible. Germaine Greer is not afraid to point out that too many women don't like themselves or each other because there is nothing to like. We are all lazy to some degree, we are all self-centered. When we move away from our warped visions of ourselves, when we face the truths lurking in our minds, only then will we begin to rejoice in the world we are creating. □

trends

THE IMPACT OF EQUAL RIGHTS

One of the most profoundly libertarian pieces of legislation ever proposed—the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution—moved a step closer to implementation in October when it passed the House on a 354 to 23 vote. The proposed amendment is limited specifically to *government* actions; it would prohibit any law or policy on any level of government that treated women differently from men. House supporters beat back an amendment designed to emasculate the bill, by retaining "protective" legislation and draft exemption for women.

This was the second year that the bill has passed the House (after being introduced *every year since 1923*), but supporters predict another difficult time in the upper chamber. The Senators, generally older, nearly all male, and much more insulated from the public, don't seem to comprehend the demand that women be treated as people. Or perhaps their resistance stems from an inability to cope with the far-reaching changes in our social structure which would result from full sexual equality.

The impact of the Amendment was the subject of a special issue of the *YALE LAW JOURNAL*. The issue pointed out that the Amendment would have a major impact on domestic/sexual relationships. As legal equals, the age of consent would be the same for both sexes, wives could keep their own names, alimony would be available to either party, and child-custory would go to the best-qualified parent. Changes in criminal law would include invalidation of prostitution laws (unless directed equally at both sexes) and statutory rape laws. "Protective" labor legislation would be wiped out, removing a major argument for paying women less. Maternity/child-rearing leaves of absence would probably become available to fathers as well as mothers. And, yes, women would participate as much—or as little—in the military as men do (and as women now do in Israel).

The authors leave no doubt where their sympathies lie and urge the Amendment's passage because "our legal structure will continue to support and command an inferior status for women so long as it permits *any* differentiation in legal treatment on the basis of sex."

SOURCES:

"Women's Equal Rights Backers Win House Vote for Amendment," *LOS ANGELES TIMES*, 13 October 1971.

"Facing Equality for Women," *TIME*, 4 October 1971, pp. 58-59.

UNMENTIONABLES HIT THE MEDIA

Can advertising be a force for social change? When it throws aside old taboos and deals openly with sexual problems, it certainly can. And that seems to be happening with several types of products.

In September television viewers for the first time began seeing commercials for Playtex tampons, a followup to last year's breakthrough for feminine hygiene sprays (begun by Objectivist adman Jerry Della Femina). The new commercials, like those for Scott Paper's Confidets sanitary napkins, are so far being shown only on stations that do not abide by the National Association of Broadcasters puritanical "Code"—the same standard that forbids liquor ads and prohibits drinking any of the beer shown in beer commercials. The manufacturers of feminine hygiene products have repeatedly petitioned for changes in Code policy but so far to no avail. Meanwhile, more and more independent stations are eagerly going after the new advertising dollars.

In the male products area, there has been a new thrust into magazine advertising. Following Julius Schmid Co.'s very low-key ads promoting "birth control for men" in *PLAYBOY* and similar magazines, competitor Young's Drug Products Corp. has started placing half-page full-color illustrated ads for Trojan prophylactics in such major magazines as *LOOK*. Although still pitched to the "prevention of disease" theme, the ads are nonetheless a significant departure from tradition. Like the feminine hygiene ads, they may help free this society of some of its destructive hang-ups about sex and the human body.

SOURCE:

"Feminine Hygiene and the TV Code," *BUSINESS WEEK*, 11 September 1971.

A NEW SLANT ON TV NEWS

On November 2, the NET program "The Advocates" presented a significant topic—a debate on "Should Television News Be Exempt from the Fairness Doctrine?" Each week "The Advocates" presents an hour-long debate on a topic of interest and then invites viewers to write in their vote. Past debates have included pros and cons on school vouchers and pro and con on whether the government should drop its case against Daniel Ellsburg (63% said it should). The total number of votes cast is around 8000—small enough for libertarian votes to make a difference.

This particular show was interesting in that there was a libertarian (and former *OBJECTIVIST* author) on each side of the debate! Star witness of the "yes" team was Edith Efron, author of *THE NEWS TWISTERS* and staff writer for *TV GUIDE*. The star witness for the "no" team was Jeffrey St. John, columnist and CBS and NBC news commentator.

The basic position of the "yes" team was that while it was very desirable to get the government completely out of TV licensing, this was not technologically feasible, given the limited number of VHF channels. (No mention at all was made of UHF and only brief mention of cable TV. Miss Efron mentioned only "pay TV".) Meanwhile, therefore, the stranglehold that liberal viewpoints have in the networks should be broken by FCC extension of the fairness doctrine into news broadcasting.

The "no" team took the position that the fairness doctrine already represented encroachment into free speech and that to extend the doctrine was to extend coercion. The point was made at length that most towns have more TV stations than newspapers and that if the three networks represent a monopoly to be regulated, then newspapers and the wire-services that feed them would logically be subject to the same regulation.

No mention was made by either side of the spectacular failure of the government to apply the fairness doctrine to itself or to "public service" broadcasting. (*REASON* editor Tibor Machan once tried unsuccessfully to obtain equal time to argue against the government's ads for Savings Bonds and the Peace Corps.) The most important point, however, was that *both* sides explicitly wanted the government out of any normative licensing—the only quibble was over what to do until that end can be achieved.

TILL THE END OF THE CONTRACT . . .

One of the holdovers from the days of 40-year lifespans is the ideal of marriage "till death us do part." Mounting divorce statistics (one out of three marriages in California, one out of four nationwide) belie our devotion to this ideal—and were it not for inertia, financial ties, restrictive divorce laws, and of course "the children," one wonders how high the rate might go.

One way of facing reality might be to make marriage contracts for shorter terms, with options to renew. This idea was proposed this year in Maryland. Two female legislators, Lena K. Lee and Hildagardeis Boswell, introduced a bill in the House of Delegates last February that would have permitted three-year, renewable marriage contracts. Delegate Boswell stated, "I'm a firm believer that you shouldn't be shackled to people whom you love. I'm also a firm believer in trying to adjust yourself as easily to marriage as possible, and, if it doesn't work out, getting out as amicably as you can . . . . I'm quite sure the church won't like this, but with the 18-year-old vote coming in, I think the youngster will look upon this as a totally new approach toward marriage and a family situation."

The bill failed to pass, but Ms. Boswell is now writing a book on the contract marriage concept to lay the groundwork for future legislative attempts.

SOURCES:

"Nuptial Vows Would Expire in 3 Years," Associated Press, 26 February 1971.

"Her Bill Failed to Pass But Had Other Results," UPI, 18 October 1971. □

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1. Entries are due by January 31, 1971 and should be submitted to Contest, 15 Yale Street, Winchester, Mass.
2. Entries should be approximately 250 words.
3. All entries become property of the New England Libertarian Alliance.

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publisher's notes

● Lanny Friedlander, founder and original editor of *REASON*, is now in business as Conceptual Design Group, Box 5970 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10017 (212-233-5910). The firm offers a variety of graphic design services. One of Mr. Friedlander's recent designs is the book cover for Roger J. Williams' *NUTRITION AGAINST DISEASE*.

● Dr. Albert G. Wilson and his wife Donna are going to repeat their excellent course on *THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FUTUROLOGY* during the Winter Quarter 1972 at the University of California, Los Angeles, Extension. They last gave it in the Spring Quarter 1971, and it treated the four major components of the emerging science of change: *Theory* (Dynamics and Modeling of Change, the Concept of Alternative Futures), *Methodologies* (Morphological Construction, Iterated Feedback Surveys, and Trend Extrapolations), *Assessments* (Values and Value Systems, Technological and Social Assessments), and *Planning* (Long Range and Short-Range, the Planning of Planning). Dr. Wilson defines Futurology in part as "the study and design of methodologies for imaging, forecasting, and shaping the future and influencing change; the scientific study of . . . any activity that predicts or shapes the future; the study of the nature of time and the dynamics of change." As readers of our issue on Social Change (*REASON*, June 1971) will appreciate, a course such as this has some far-reaching implications for libertarianism, and has much to offer those interested in acquiring some tools to use in promoting societal change in accord with libertarian values.

For those living in the Los Angeles or Southern California area, this course is highly recommended. Further information about the course and enrollment can be obtained from University of California Extension, Los Angeles, CA. The course reference is X 403.1.

● *REASON* apologizes for a mixup in last month's photographs. Shots of Boston appeared in place of New York (page 7). Although the principle the photos meant to illustrate was well served (as evidenced by the ease with which the mixup occurred), in behalf of accuracy we are publishing this apology.

● Previously, *REASON* announced its intention to award a prize subscription for the best letter selected to be published each month. In view of the difficulty encountered in selecting the "best" of the highly diverse letters we receive, *REASON* will not award such prizes.

We are pleased by the quality and quantity of mail received from our readers and hope to continue to publish a lively and literate selection of letters.

● Look for large increases in unemployment if the latest Democratic-backed minimum wage bill is passed. One of the hardest-hit categories is likely to be household maids and cleaning women, who are currently not covered by minimum wage laws. Under the bill, people would be forced to pay such workers $1.80 per hour in 1972 and $2.00 an hour starting in 1973. For those who retain their jobs, of course, this will be fine, but many of those employed by lower and middle-income families will simply be let go and may end up on welfare.

● Oblivious to the very real dangers posed by automobile airbag systems ("Is 'Inflation' Good for You?" *REASON*, March 1971), Ralph Nader is contemplating legal action to force the Transportation Department to reinstate its now-cancelled order requiring installation of front-seat airbags by August 1973. Nader apparently goes along with the bureaucratic trade-off that more lives will be saved by airbags that work than will be lost due to (inevitable) accidental misfiring—*ergo*, airbags are good and can legitimately be forced on everybody. Whatever happened to the individual's right to decide for himself what risks to take with his own body?

● A new journal will make its debut in January: *THE JOURNAL OF LEGAL STUDIES*, published by the University of Chicago Law School. It will be edited by law professor Richard A. Posner, with assistance from an advisory committee including Chicago-school economists Gary S. Becker and George J. Stigler and Norval Morris, coauthor of the excellent (and libertarian) book *THE HONEST POLITICIAN'S GUIDE TO CRIME CONTROL*. Volume 1, Number 1 will include articles by George Stigler and Harold Demsetz. Subscriptions to the twice-yearly journal are $8.

● A new libertarian political party based on Objectivist principles has been announced by John D. Daniels. Further information on the Capitalist Party, including a statement of principles, may be obtained from Mr. Daniels at 510 S. Normandie, Apt. 307, Los Angeles, CA 90020.

● Life Problems Consultants is an association of libertarian oriented psychiatrists and psychologists. Present members of the association are Geoffrey Hosta, M.D., Rod Shorter, M.A., and Henry E. Jones, M.D. Although each member of the association is autonomous and independent in the conduct of his therapy practice, the consultants are in agreement on certain fundamental issues. According to Dr. Jones:

"First, we are libertarians. Our entire approach to problems of living is consistent with this philosophy. This, of course, means that our psychotherapy is based on values which are individualistic and egoistic rather than the usual altruistic values underlying most psychotherapy practiced today.

"Second, we reject the mental disease concept of psychological problems. Any concept of a medical etiology of psychological problems bootlegs psychic-determinism via physiology and is sloppy epistemology.

"Third, each member of Life Problems Consultants is also a member of the A.A.A.I.M.H. (The American Association for the Abolition of Involuntary Mental Hospitalization) and opposed to any form of coercive "psychiatric treatment."

"Fourth, we are firmly committed to the belief that absolute privacy and confidentiality is essential to our work. Communications with our clients and the information given us is held in strictest confidence.

"Fifth, our goal is to assist our client toward greater autonomy and independence in the conduct of his life."

Further information may be obtained from Dr. Jones at 1888 Century Park East, Suite 1810, Century City, CA 90067. □

letters

■ I recently received a letter which was stamped with a slogan that reminded me of your magazine and its slogan, "*REASON*, **Consider the Alternative.**" The slogan is "Ours IS to Reason Why" and the letter was from the Chicago Society of Atheists. Perhaps your readers would enjoy this alternative to the usual "Ours not to reason why."

Richard Latimer
West Chicago, Illinois

Have Faith!

■ I have been thinking quite a bit about the view of social change implied in your article "Leverage Points for Social Change" (*REASON*, June 1971). It seems that there is an interaction between cultural change and change in political structures which most Objectivists have not picked up. Cultural change is the independent variable (there has to be *some* intellectual predisposition toward libertarianism before libertarians could be hired to work in think tanks, etc.), as a result of the fact that man has free will; changes in the political structure can induce further changes in the culture, which in turn can induce further changes in the political structure. To concretize this, imagine that the transportation industry were completely de-regulated as the result of libertarian advice to President Nixon (ha!!). Since free competition produces a superior result compared to government regulation, over time the results would be observed, and (if there were libertarians in the culture to draw the proper conclusions) people would *see* that freedom works. A second result of de-regulating the transportation industry would be to foster the rise of competent, independent, rational men within the transportation industry, and to cause the demise of those whose prime qualification for their jobs is the ability to kiss asses in Washington. The poeple who are at the top, so to speak, are usually more important in determining cultural trends than the people who are on the bottom.

The same type of interactions occur between cultural change and all other aspects of reality that man faces. For example, technological change can make it easier—or harder—for men to see that freedom is workable, and technological change tends to change the relative "rankings" of people in society, so that the people who have risen tend to "count for more," culturally, than they did before. Another example is the existence of so much open land in early America.

An analogy can be drawn between this sort of process and what Ludwig von Mises calls "the driving force of money." Cultural change is the independent variable, as is the change in people's preferences. And the political structure's impact on the culture is analogous to "the driving force of money." Clear?

Frank Bubb
Philadelphia, Penn.

■ I was very pleased to read Tibor Machan's review of my book, *RETURN TO REASON* (*REASON*, October 1971). I genuinely appreciate both the praise and the criticisms he offered.

My reference to Objectivism as the only rational school of contemporary philosophy was intended to convey the point that I have an intellectual commitment to Objectivism. In other words, I wanted to make it clear that I am not a "neutral" commentator. However, it is true that I did not discuss any other schools of thought in an effort to prove by comparison that Objectivism is the only rational school. Hence, he is correct in stating that I do not establish such a claim in the book. No doubt, it would have been better had I said, "For several years, I have been a student of *what I consider to be* the only rational school of . . ."

Concerning contextualism: a commitment to contextualism is *implicit* in my treatment of the various aspects of Objectivism. I do concede, however, that I do not *explicitly* deal with this concept, and I further agree that such an explicit treatment would have enhanced the value of the book.

Concerning non-human or special rights: If I have understood Machan's comments, we are dealing here with what political scientists call substantive rights vs. procedural rights. My understanding of the Objectivist position is that procedural rights are heavily discounted; I cannot recall any explicit reference to them in the works of Ayn Rand. My own position, which I believe to be the Objectivist position, is this: so-called procedural rights are not really rights at all and should not be referred to by that name. Such "rights" are actually privileges or procedural guarantees of one type or another. Examples: the "right" to trial-by-jury, to vote, of *habeas corpus*. These guarantees may be very important *in the context* of a representative democracy and an advocate judicial system, but such institutions as representative democracy and advocate courts are not *necessary* to the protection of freedom and justice.

I cannot agree with the comment that a man cannot alienate himself from one or more of his rights. Objectivism defines a right as a moral principle, defining and sanctioning a man's freedom of action in a social context. I think the key word for the present discussion is "sanctioning." What the criminal abdicates is, in my judgment, the sanction itself. Otherwise, when he is subjected to a penalty, we would have to say that he is being victimized, i.e., that no penalty can be *just*.

To phrase it a bit differently: Either a particular freedom of action is sanctioned, or it is not. If it is in fact sanctioned, then no interference from others (including the courts) is justified. If, however, the sanction has in some way been negated, then such interference can be justified. Hence, I conclude that it is the sanction itself that the criminal "sets aside" by his criminality. Since the sanction is the very essence of the right itself, I think we can say that the criminal does in fact set aside the right, not merely opportunity.

Paul Lepanto
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

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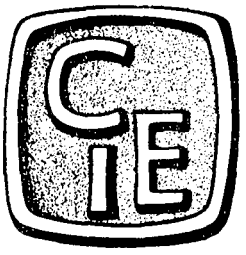

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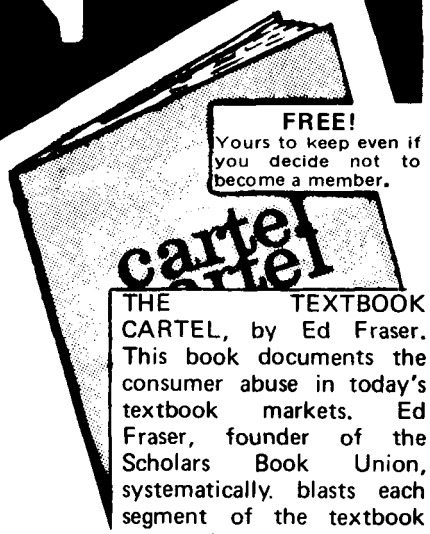

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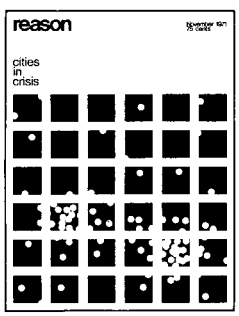

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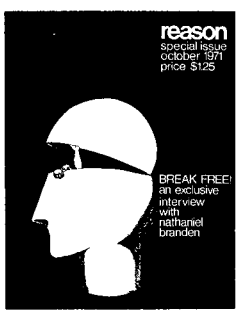

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